College of Policing Stop and Search Training Experiment

Process Evaluation

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Contents

Preface

RAND Europe, in partnership with the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the University of Oxford, was commissioned in July 2015 to support the College of Policing in a process evaluation of the Stop and Search Training Pilot. This report presents findings from the process evaluation.

Following an introduction to the background to the evaluation and the methods used by the research team, the report examines the **implementation of the training pilot**, drawing on data from interviews with trainers, force project leads, and national training designers and stakeholders as well as a survey of trainers and observations of the training sessions (Chapters 2 and 3). The report then examines evidence around **the role of peers, supervisors and senior officers** in facilitating or acting as barriers to change in stop and search practice, drawing on observations of training, interviews with trainers and force leads, and interviews with police officers who had received the training (Chapter 4). Next, the report examines **officer perceptions of the training pilot**, using officer interviews, including 'field interviews' conducted during patrol observations (Chapter 5). The report then presents findings relating to **the behaviour of officers during routine duties** following their participation in the training, using innovative systematic observation data from observations of police on patrol (Chapter 6). The report closes by examining the evaluation's **implications for a future national roll-out of stop and search training** to all 43 police forces, as well as other implications of the findings for future training pilots (Chapter 7).

All methods used in this study were developed by the research team with direct collaborative input from researchers at the College of Policing. Additionally, all research activities were undertaken by a team of researchers including the report's authors and College of Policing researchers. The analysis and reporting in this document were undertaken entirely by the research team and are independent of the College of Policing.

Full project methods and additional data are included as appendices to this report, and methodological limitations are noted where appropriate. This report does not address questions surrounding the measurable impact of the pilot on police practice or knowledge, as those questions are being considered by a separate impact evaluation (see Miller and Alexandrou, 2016).

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, founded in 1918 and opened officially in 1925, is Israel's premier university as well as its leading research institution. The Hebrew University is ranked internationally among the 100 leading universities in the world and first among Israeli universities.

The Centre for Criminology at the University of Oxford is a world-leading institution dedicated to connecting criminological work to the broader concerns of the social sciences; to thinking comparatively about crime and punishment; to bringing together sociological and normative approaches to the analysis of crime and justice; and to working at the intersections between criminology and public policy.

RAND Europe is a not-for-profit policy research organisation that aims to improve policy and decision-making in the public interest through independent research and analysis. This report has been peer reviewed in accordance with RAND's quality assurance standards.

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Acronyms used in this document

Acronym	Meaning
BTP	British Transport Police
EHRC	Equality and Human Rights Commission
GMP	Greater Manchester Police
GOWISELY	An acronym regarding what an officer must explain to a person being stopped and searched in advance of the search taking place: **G**rounds for search; **O**bject of search; **W**arrant card; **I**dentity of officer; **S**tation to which the officer is attached; **E**ntitlement to a copy of the search record; **L**egal power used; **Y**ou are being detained for the purposes of a search.
JOG	An acronym for the extent of a less-intrusive search, involving only **J**acket, **O**uter garments and **G**loves of the person being searched.
MPS	Metropolitan Police Service
PACE	The Police and Criminal Evidence Act
RCT	Randomised Controlled Trial
SPOC	Single Point of Contact
SSO	Systematic Social Observation
TVP	Thames Valley Police

Summary

Overview of the training pilot and evaluation

In 2014, the College of Policing entered into a partnership with the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) to develop new National Policing Curriculum learning standards on stop and search, and to design related learning materials. This was primarily in response to a series of reports on problems identified with the use of stop and search powers by police in England and Wales. The training was part of a reform package put forward in 2014 by the Home Secretary to improve public confidence in the police, and in particular improve issues of race disproportionality in the use of stop and search powers by police (Home Office, 2014b). These reforms to training followed recommendations by Her Majesties Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) (2013) that new training and a clear definition of an effective and fair search be developed.[1]

The training intervention

The College, in consultation with the EHRC and police stakeholders, developed a training intervention that was piloted across six police forces in England from August 2015 through October 2015. The piloting was undertaken with the intention of informing and supporting a national roll-out of training to all officers in England and Wales from 2016/17, and to develop an evidence base around the impact of training on improving stop and search practice and the use of the relevant powers.

The pilot intervention, as originally conceived, was expected to develop and test training intended to improve practical legal decision-making, reduce unconscious bias and enhance procedural justice[2] in stop and search encounters,[3] and in the end the pilot intervention was expected to influence:

- officers' knowledge, attitudes and anticipated behaviour relating to stop and search;
- their 'hit rates' (the proportion of searches resulting in an arrest)[4], and;

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[1] In particular, HMIC cited the fact that less than half of all forces provided any form of refresher training on stop and search, and most officers had not received any training on stop and search outside of their recruit training, and that there was no agreed definition of an effective search in England and Wales.

[2] Procedural justice is 'the fairness of the procedures authorities use to deal with a situation' (Mastrofski et al., 2016: 120) and is traditionally measured along four axes: level of *participation* by a member of the public in an encounter, *neutrality* of the police, the degree to which a member of the public is treated with *dignity*, and whether police show *trustworthy motives* (Mastrofski et al., 2016; see also Mazerolle et al., 2012, Wheller et al., 2013).

[3] Based on internal planning documentation from the College.

- the quality of recorded grounds (the written justification for search).

The delivery of training was primarily based on a Guidance for Trainers document that was delivered to force-level trainers through national 'train-the-trainers' events in August 2015. The Guidance document was intended to aid trainers in developing one-day training sessions to be held at force-level, with the intention of achieving 14 related learning objectives surrounding the history, purpose, and appropriate and effective uses of stop and search powers. The training was intended to be participatory in nature, utilising exercises and discussion to illustrate key points.

Following HMIC's suggestion, the College published a new working definition of a 'fair and effective' search on 15 August.[5] This was subsequently included in the training package, though only adopted by four of the six participating forces.[6] This had been developed as guidance on a 'higher standard' of justification for a search, particularly moving from a standard of 'reasonable suspicion' to 'genuine belief' that a specific item would be found in the justification for a search. The definition was introduced in the training in part to understand how officers would understand and respond to this heightened standard.

Alongside the Guidance for Trainers, the College developed pre-training reading material ('pre-read'), an assessment for officers to complete in advance of the training (based on the pre-read) and a basic slide pack to assist trainers in structuring their courses. The College then worked with independent researchers to evaluate the implementation of training and impact of the pilot after the training was delivered, with evaluation findings informing the national training re-design process. The intervention is outlined in Figure 1.

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[4] Certain forces have adopted a wider interpretation of 'hit rate', including not only arrests but also for example cannabis warnings and penalty notices; however, in this evaluation the narrower definition has been maintained.

[5] For reference the definition was as follows: A stop and search is most likely to be fair and effective when: the search was a justified and lawful use of the power that stands up to public scrutiny; the officer genuinely believes the person has an item in their possession; the member of the public understands why they have been searched and feels that they have been treated with respect; the search was necessary and was the least intrusive method a police officer could use to establish whether a member of the public has a prohibited article or an item for use in crime with them and; more often than not the item is found.

[6] While the definition applied across the whole of the police service in England and Wales, due to disagreements around content and phrasing, certain forces chose not to adopt it.

Figure 1: Pilot training intervention model
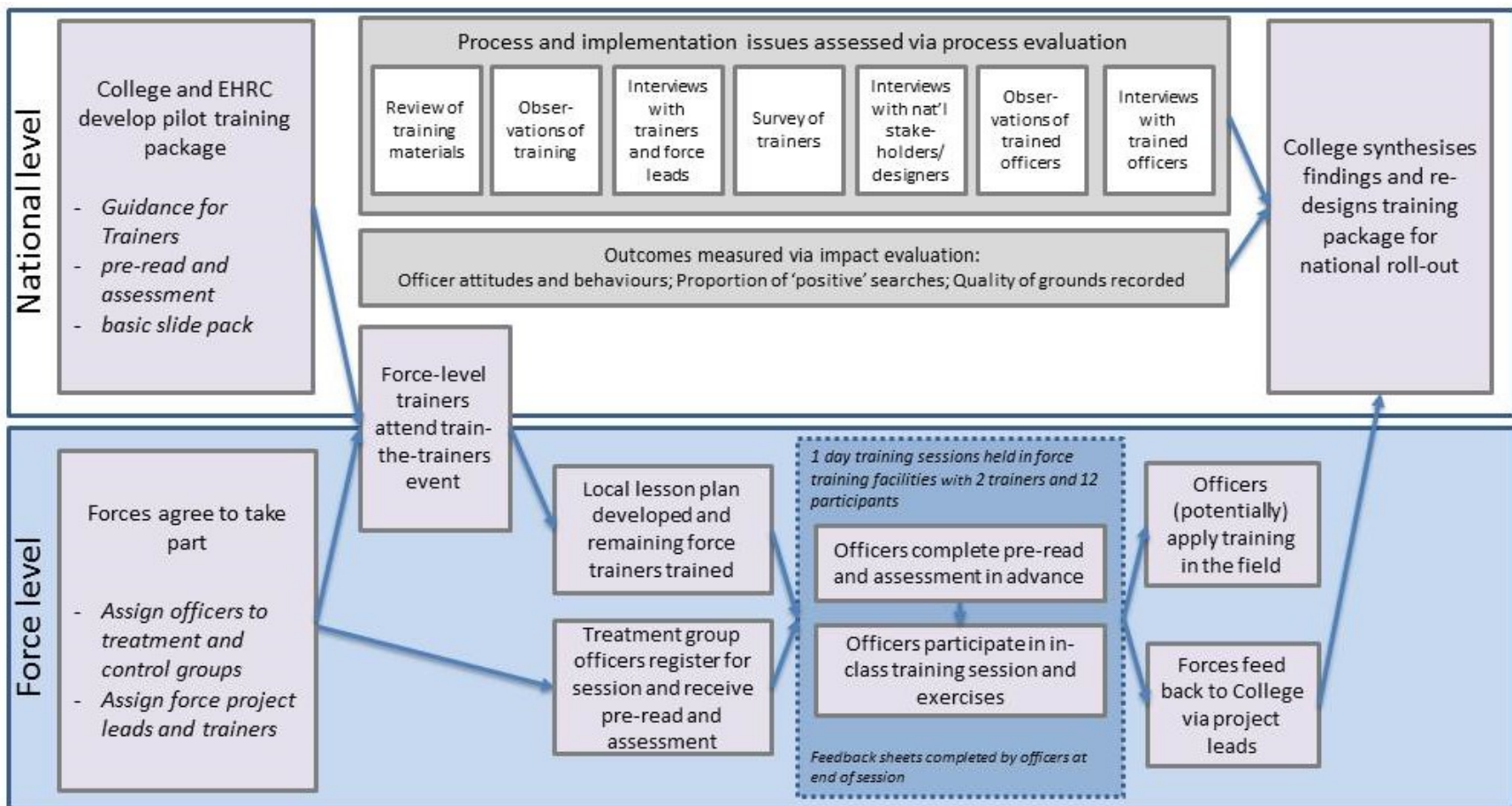
The training pilot was implemented as a randomised control trial (RCT), whereby approximately 110 officers from each participating force were assigned at random to the treatment group (i.e. given the training), while another 110 officers were assigned at random to a control group (i.e. not given the training). The College commissioned and supported an impact evaluation that measured any differences between the treatment and control groups against the pilot's stated objectives. This impact evaluation forms the basis of a separate report (see Miller and Alexandrou, 2016).

Alongside the impact evaluation, the College also commissioned and supported a process evaluation of the RCT, which is the subject of this report and was undertaken separately from the impact evaluation.[7] The process evaluation fieldwork took place from August to December 2015, and examined only the treatment side of the RCT, looking at training implementation issues, perceptions of key stakeholders and trainers, and behaviour and experiences of trained officers.

Research questions

The process evaluation aimed to answer six research questions – four questions examining training implementation, and two examining the behaviour of trained officers:

Training implementation

1. Was the intervention delivered as intended?
2. What were the main implementation issues?
3. To what extent did peers, supervisors, middle managers and senior leaders act as a facilitator or barrier to change?
4. How was the training course perceived by officers, and how did it reportedly influence their stop and search practices?

Officer behaviour

5. Did trained officers appear to apply their learning in practice and, if so, how?
6. How did the police and public interact during encounters after the training, and what factors were associated with better quality encounters?

The first four questions broadly examine the implementation issues and perceptions of those involved in terms of what was seen to work and what challenges were experienced in both implementing the training and putting the training into practice. The final two questions examine the behaviour of trained officers subsequent to the training.

Project methods

The process evaluation utilised six main methods to answer questions surrounding implementation and perceptions of the training. These were:

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[7] The process evaluation involved input on methods design and fieldwork support from the College of Policing, however all analyses and writing up in this document was undertaken independently by the authors.

(i)   observations of 12 training sessions;

(ii)   in-depth interviews with 18 force-level trainers and project leads;

(iii) a survey of force-level trainers (with responses from 22 of 28 trainers);

(iv)   in-depth interviews with 6 national-level training designers and project stakeholders,;

(v)   in-depth interviews with 30 officers who had received the training, and;

(vi)   feedback sheets provided by officers immediately after completing training (with responses from 548 of 662 trained officers).

To examine questions around officer behaviour, the evaluation utilised a systematic social observation (SSO) approach involving quantitative coding and qualitative narratives of treatment-group officers' activities during patrol shifts.

Findings on intervention implementation

Was the intervention delivered as intended?

The interviews with national stakeholders and training designers identified that **there was general agreement on high-level goals of the training**, which broadly speaking were thought to be to improve stop and search practice, to reduce levels of race disproportionality, increase the 'hit rate' (i.e. searches resulting in an arrest) and, in all likelihood and as a consequence of these changes, decrease the overall use of stop and search powers. However, **how these goals were to be achieved in practice lacked clarity** among stakeholders and designers at the national level, who in turn articulated differing intentions for how the training should have been delivered. It was, therefore, complicated to assess the degree to which the training was delivered as intended, since the intentions were not entirely clear.

This lack of clarity translated to the force level, where **the problems that the training aimed to solve were not understood or presented consistently by trainers.** In certain forces, the training was presented as a 'refresher' course that did not include much new material, while in others it was framed as something meant to result in behavioural changes.

Despite the lack of clarity, **the trainers provided a 'good-faith', if varied, interpretation of the training as set out in the Guidance for Trainers**. Due in part to instructions from the College that trainers could modify the course as needed to be relevant to conditions at the force level – and because the Guidance did not provide clear steps to be followed – there was substantial variability in the level of focus placed on each learning objective. Nonetheless, **trainers felt that they had attempted to reflect the intentions of the pilot in their sessions.**

While there were a range of areas on which each training session could have focused, observations of training and interviews with trainers strongly suggested that **the training delivery focused on improving practical legal decision-making and improving recording of 'reasonable grounds'** (i.e. the recorded justification for conducting a search), and further that activities related to developing reasonable grounds were the ones with which officers most engaged.

Other priority areas were not covered as extensively. Most notably, **unconscious bias featured in all training sessions, but normally briefly and without thorough discussion**. This was often through brief

exercises and with limited follow-up discussion, very little debriefing, and little development of practical skills involved.

Procedural justice was not central to training despite being supported as relevant to the training by wider evidence, and was only discussed peripherally in training sessions, for example relating to the potential adverse impact of a stop and search encounter. As with content around unconscious bias, most discussions that could be related to procedural justice involved very limited debriefing or elaboration that would aid skills transfer.

Observers found that **all training sessions primarily used a participatory, adult-education approach**, which was in line with the training designers' intentions. However, **participatory activities such as role-play were largely absent**, while some of the designers had expected role-play to feature more heavily in the training approach. Finally, **pre-reading materials were rarely (if ever) referenced in training sessions**, suggesting that many officers either did not read them or that they were not particularly relevant to discussions in class. As a result, **the purpose and impact of the pre-reading remained unclear.**[8]

What were the main implementation issues?

Most trainers across all forces expressed **positive opinions about the value of the course** they ultimately ended up delivering, and saw potential value in the training for improving practice. Nonetheless, a number of substantial implementation issues were identified both in the process leading up to training delivery and in the content of the training.

The most consistent implementation issue identified in discussions with trainers was the lack of a manual for training delivery (i.e. a set of clear instructions and requirements for providing the training, including for example, ordering and timings for activities). In turn, **the use of guidance (which did not set firm requirements for training delivery), rather than a manual, underpinned many of the implementation concerns identified in observations and interviews.** Issues relating to the guidance-based approach were identified early on in the pilot, and trainers and force leads for the training were initially expecting much clearer direction on how training should be conducted.

Compounding this issue, **the 'train-the-trainers' events did not match expectations with content**, and a number of trainers reported leaving the events with concerns about how they were going to design their sessions. This was both because they expected to be told via a manual, and because of a relatively short timeframe between the 'train-the-trainers' events and training dates (less than a month in some cases, and during the summer holidays).

More specific issues relating to course content and delivery included:

- **The definition of a 'fair and effective' stop and search**, which created challenges for trainers and officers attending training. The definition was thought by certain officers attending the training as well as leadership in two of the pilot forces to be in potential conflict with other guidance in the force. In forces where the definition was used, the definition generated a number

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[8] It is worth noting, however, that the pre-read and assessment were developed to take the place of an e-learning module that could not be developed in time for the pilot, but is likely to feature in the national training package.

of questions and challenges from officers attending the training, and trainers often did not know how to respond to officers' challenges.

- **The smell of cannabis 'rule'**, which was new guidance to officers that the smell of cannabis – on its own does and without additional grounds – was not sufficient to justify a search. This generated substantial discussion and challenge by officers attending the training as it was in opposition to many officers' past practices and interpretations of their legal powers.

Finally, it is worth noting that many trainers spent time during the introduction to the observed sessions attempting to **establish trainer credibility** by, for example, discussing past experience of stop and search with the officers attending the training. Where this was done, it appeared to be well-received. In cases where trainers had no experience with stop and search (e.g. they were member of police staff, or had limited recent operational experience), the observations and interviews suggested trainers were perceived as less credible by officers.

To what extent did peers, supervisors, middle managers and senior leaders act as a facilitator or barrier to change?

A number of communication issues were identified in relation to the ways in which treatment group officers heard about the training from their supervisors or senior officers. **Advance communication of training to attendees differed in important ways between forces**, and while most forces appeared to have made efforts to clearly communicate the purpose of the training to officers, in at least two forces officers arrived at training believing that the training was meant for 'problem officers' or that they had been selected due to poor performance, rather than randomly. Officers, therefore, reported **varied understandings of why they had been selected to participate**, with a notable minority of interviewees indicating that they did not believe their selection was random or that advance communications were not entirely clear, and **in some instances this impacted upon their engagement with the training**, for example where they reported arriving without a clear understanding of, or scepticism toward, the purpose of the training as a result of communications issues.

Another important difference in communication surrounding the training – particularly by trainers at the outset of training sessions, was **the degree to which trainers acknowledged that stop and search was a 'problem' for their own force.** That is, trainers differed to the degree in which they would suggest that their force had shortcomings or whether the source of the 'problem' was elsewhere (e.g. with other forces thought to be 'worse' in their conduct of stop and search, or that it was a political problem 'invented' by social science or politicians). While some trainers admitted force-level issues, virtually all trainers reassured the specific participants during the training session that they were not specifically singled out as 'problem users'. Such messaging may impact on the willingness of officers to engage in behavioural change.

There was also **a recognised knowledge gap amongst direct supervisors and senior officers regarding the training content** that was discussed by trainers and trainees. This gap led some officers to worry that, if they used the training standards from the pilot (which differed from the standards other officers were following), they could be unfairly taken to task by their supervisors.

While not necessarily related to any specific supervisors or senior officers, **cultural or organisational barriers were also identified during training implementation**. These included the belief that a target-

oriented culture or existing organisational attitudes supported an approach to stop and search that was in conflict with the training. Officers in interviews and during training sessions also noted that technology could help or hamper proper recording of grounds; for example it was reported, in some forces, that the stop and search form was too small for good note-taking and that, in other forces, mobile devices were being used for recording, which could potentially improve recording of grounds.

Where it was explicitly offered, **support of training by supervisors or senior officers appeared to encourage officers** to engage with the training. Where officers were given the sense that senior management supported the training and new guidance (for example, during an introduction to the training session), this appeared to have the effect of allaying officers' worries about the impacts of any change in their own practice. Conversely, where middle managers or senior officers expressed cynicism about the training during these sessions, this appeared to enhance pre-existing concerns about the training from other officers attending the training. Interestingly, during interviews **officers did not report substantial influences from their supervisors or peers** in terms of how they use stop and search, and the general sense provided by officers was that they were left alone in exercising their powers unless something went wrong.

Officers also reported an awareness of the political context of stop and search, particularly the statements by the Home Secretary and political pressures to change practice. While this is not strictly an organisational factor or related to superior officers, it underlined the multiple pressures officers face in using their powers.

How was the training course perceived by officers?

Officers were mostly positive about the format of the training and quality of trainers and felt in particular that the scenario-based exercises exploring reasonable grounds were helpful and thought-provoking. When interviewed about the training content, **officers tended to focus their discussions on the definition of a 'fair and effective' search, establishing reasonable grounds, and conscious and unconscious bias.** Although some officers were unable to remember the definition of a 'fair and effective' search, the majority recalled the shift from 'reasonable suspicion' to 'genuine belief' in the new definition. Indeed, **the shift from 'reasonable suspicion' to 'genuine belief' was one of the most contentious issues for officers,** and findings from interviews with officers mirrored findings from training observations and interviews with trainers in this regard.

Relatedly, **many officers had reservations about perceived changes to reasonable grounds for a search**, such as the smell of cannabis 'rule' and the sense that the new guidance removed flexibility and personal judgment from their use of stop and search powers.

How did the training pilot reportedly influence stop and search practices of officers?

Some officers reported that **the training had prompted them to conduct fewer searches**. This was partially attributed to the change to the level of grounds that were required for a search (i.e. the shift from 'reasonable suspicion' to 'genuine belief'). However, **this reported reduction could not be attributed to the training alone**. It should be considered against the backdrop of a large recent decline in the use of

stop and search across England and Wales[9] as well as specific pressures within the forces involved in the pilot, where there are wider efforts to reduce use of stop and search.

In terms of quality of search practice, most officers reported that **the training had a positive impact on the quality of their stop and search practice**, for example, by giving them a better understanding of the justification for a search, encouraging them to use other options before conducting a search and recording more details on the grounds for their search on the forms. They also suggested that the training **improved officers' confidence in using the power**, for example some reported an increased willingness to challenge other officers' grounds.

However, not all interviewees believed that the training would make officers more confident or improve the quality of their use of stop and search powers. A few of the officers interviewed stated that the training had discouraged them from using the power as it had become overly onerous to employ, while **a minority suggested that the training had very limited impact on their stop and search practice.**

Findings on officer behaviour

Did trained officers appear to apply their learning in practice and, if so, how?

The research team observed 30 shifts across the six forces, observing neighbourhood, response and specialist officers in areas where stop and search was regularly used. During the fieldwork, only nine stop and search encounters were observed, although an additional 90 encounters were observed where the police had contact with a person they suspected of being involved in criminal or disorderly activity, but did not conduct a search.[10] While the relatively low number of searches may have been in part due to observer effects (e.g. where officers modified their behaviour due to the presence of an observer), the number of uses of stop and search powers during the observations mirror wider distributions of searches within routine police activity in official statistics, and it was just as likely that the police rarely used stop and search powers regardless of observer presence.

The small number of observed encounters and the potential effect of the observers on officer behaviour meant it was hard to determine the degree to which officers applied their learning in practice. This issue was compounded by the fact that training was delivered differently in different forces, so it was not clear what each officer learned from the training. Nonetheless, examining the nine stop and search encounters observed, the **officers appeared to follow the correct stop and search process in most cases.** They, for example, completed most or all steps required prior to conducting a search, which suggested good compliance with the legal requirements amongst the observed officers.

How did the police and public interact during encounters, and what factors were associated with better quality encounters?

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[9] Home Office statistics (2015) show a reduction of 40% in the use of stop and search powers in the year ending March 2015.

[10] The observational component of the research specifically examined police interactions with suspects, and did not examine police interactions with all other members of the public (i.e. non-suspects).

In all police encounters with suspects that were recorded during patrol observations (both stop and search and other kinds of encounters, a total of 99 across the 30 shifts), **officers displayed elements of procedural justice and effective communication to a variable extent.** For example, in most recorded encounters, the suspect was able to express their viewpoint and the officer was seen to be a receptive listener, which is important in establishing a procedurally just encounter. Similarly, in most encounters the officer explained to the suspect why the police became involved in the situation, and was polite in the encounter. However, certain other behaviours related to showing 'trustworthy motives', such as offering assistance or comfort, were less prevalent in the sample of encounters.

While stop and search encounters were relatively rare, **suspects responded more negatively to officers in stop and search encounters than in other police-initiated interactions**. In none of the eight stop and search encounters for which relevant data was available, did the suspect involved display an initial, positive attitude towards the police, while in half (four) the suspect displayed an explicitly negative one. This was a much higher proportion of negative attitude than in other kinds of encounters.

Holding constant other factors, **officer behaviour was related to the characteristics and demeanour of suspects,** in particular the manner in which suspects presented at the outset of the encounter. For example, if the suspect started the encounter displaying a positive attitude, the officer was more likely to be polite within the encounter. Similarly, the probability of the officer asking the suspect about their wellbeing when the suspect was initially positive was higher than when they did not display a positive attitude. It is also worth noting that police were much less likely to be polite, or explain their involvement, to suspects aged 18 or under than to those over 18. These findings, while far from conclusive due to the limitations of the data, nevertheless concur with the existing literature, and idea that the way people 'present' to police can shape the manner in which officers deal with them.

Finally, **procedurally fair officer behaviour was associated with a positive change in suspect attitudes** during encounters. Within each category of initial attitude (negative, neutral/ambiguous and positive), the most likely outcome was for a suspect to remain in the same category at the end of encounter. Yet, there was also significant movement across categories, almost all of it in a positive direction, particularly where the officers were polite, offered reassurance to the suspect, or inquired about their wellbeing. Again, given the sample size and parameters, these are not conclusive findings, but they suggest quite strongly that when police were polite, asked after people's wellbeing and provided reassurance to those they stopped, they were likely to shift attitudes in a positive direction.

Implications for training re-design and wider roll-out

1. **For national roll-out, a clear and unambiguous statement of purpose for the training needs to be developed and successfully communicated to all stakeholders in advance of the training.** It is clear from all data gathered in this evaluation that the purpose of the training was unclear amongst stakeholders from the national design level to the force-level trainers through to the officers in the treatment group, and clearer messaging would have mitigated many of the issues surrounding the training implementation.
2. **It is unclear whether stop and search-specific training will achieve the goals of the designers.** This is because stop and search is increasingly rarely used. Also, the core skills that are

important for stop and search appear to be connected to the wider skills needed for better-quality police encounters with the public – for example, overcoming initial suspect presentation and working to move encounters that begin with a negative attitude toward a more positive resolution.

3. **Re-designed training materials need to balance consistency in messaging and implementation with force-level needs.** It is important that each force understands the main purpose(s) of the training during national roll-out. Nonetheless, a number of forces have pre-existing training and internal guidance that may overlap with the training package, and may benefit from being able to modify the stop and search training to fit within current provision. There was no clear view during the evaluation on the most appropriate approach to local tailoring. Where it is not out of line with the learning objectives of the re-designed course, forces should have the ability to integrate the training into their existing approach.

4. **The training could incorporate further opportunities for developing specific skills and debriefing after exercises.** With the exception of skills around developing better reasonable grounds for conducting a search, the training pilot did not provide officers with many concrete tools; for example, in terms of overcoming bias or improving communication with members of the public. A greater focus on interpersonal skills may be beneficial in the re-design, supported by more extensive debriefing.

5. **Trainers should be provided with more comprehensive tools to win 'hearts and minds' and respond to challenges.** Especially if the training re-design remains committed to behaviour change, trainers are certain to be challenged, and in the pilot trainers did not always have tools to respond to challenges. This was especially true for example in discussions around whether and to what degree there existed a 'problem' with stop and search (and how the training might solve this), and new concepts such as unconscious bias, the 'fair and effective' definition, and the smell of cannabis 'rule'. Better tools will be essential to retain trainer credibility.

6. **If the 'fair and effective' definition is retained, trainers will require specific tools to communicate and teach it.** Related to the above implication, the new definition created a substantial amount of confusion and challenge to trainers and may have detracted from officers' ability to absorb the broader messages of the training. In the training re-design, additional preparation and tools for trainers will be required specifically for the presentation of this definition.

7. **Given the sensitivity of the topic, trainers should be able to establish credibility to build legitimacy with officers.** Where trainers have relevant experience and can demonstrate it in-class, this may help them establish authority on the topic and ease the process of presenting material that officers may see as being critical of the police. This appears important given the underlying political and force-level pressures in which the wider roll-out will find itself, and appeared to have been well-received where it was done within the pilot.

8. **Officers' acceptance of the training messages could be improved if there were explicit middle- and high-ranking support for the messages within each force.** The training as delivered did not always include explicit statements of support from senior management or supervisors. Given the concerns expressed by officers, especially during training sessions, about whether and to what degree the new guidance would be supported organisationally, explicit high-level and supervisory support of the new training package will be valuable in encouraging

behaviour change. The re-designed training should, therefore, be framed and delivered in way that sets clear expectations, but does not undermine officer confidence. This also implies that separate training for supervisors and senior officers – which is part of the national roll-out, but was not part of the pilot – could help ensure clearer messaging throughout each force.

9. **Implementation issues relating to differential standards and inconsistent communication may be less relevant for national roll-out, but bear consideration for future training pilots.** Any pilot training intended to encourage behaviour change will by definition be encouraging *some* officers to behave differently from other officers within a force. Since all officers will receive the training during the national roll-out the kinds of conflicts around differing standards of practice identified in this evaluation, and communications regarding why and how particular officers were selected to the pilot, will be less relevant in the national roll-out than in the pilot context. Nonetheless, these issues may repeat in future pilot initiatives.

Limitations

The role of the process evaluation was to describe whether and how the intervention was implemented, gather the views of those giving and receiving training, and understand how the training was received and potentially used by officers receiving it. The process evaluation's methods and its focus on the treatment group meant it was not possible to discuss the effect of the training on outcomes, which was the purpose of the accompanying impact evaluation (see Miller and Alexandrou, 2016).

It should also be noted that the officers who participated in the training were aware that they were taking part in a pilot and were in the treatment group, so were not 'blinded' to the intervention. This knowledge could have impacted their performance irrespective of the content of the training they received (sometimes referred to as a 'Hawthorne effect'). Further, stop and search receives substantial public scrutiny, so officers' interpretations of the purpose of the intervention were likely to have been affected by the wider debates on stop and search powers.

Perhaps most importantly, the research team had limited influence over the selection of officers for observation or interviews, for a number of logistical reasons. It was also not possible in all cases to know what influenced officer selection to participate in the process evaluation, as this was mediated through individual police forces and participation was voluntary. Given the non-random nature of the sample of officers involved, findings related to officer behaviour or opinions may, therefore, not be transferable to a wider population of trained officers.

1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the process evaluation, and discusses the background and context within which the training pilot exists. This chapter sets out the project's research questions, the methodological approach used by the research team and the main limitations of the methodologies used.

1.1 Overview of the evaluation

This report provides a process evaluation of a randomised controlled trial (RCT) of a pilot training initiative. In 2014, the College of Policing (hereafter 'the College') entered into a partnership with the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) to develop new National Policing Curriculum learning standards on stop and search, and to design related learning materials.

The College piloted the training package, which is described further below at section 1.3, in six forces across England from August 2015 to October 2015:

- British Transport Police (BTP)
- Cleveland Police
- Greater Manchester Police (GMP)
- Metropolitan Police Service (MPS)
- Sussex Police
- Thames Valley Police (TVP)

Forces were invited to participate by the College, and were selected by the College on the basis of capacity and willingness to deliver the training, and their ability to support an RCT and to provide data and research access to support the impact and process evaluations.

As part of the RCT, the College randomly selected 220 officers from each of the six participating forces to participate in the trial, resulting in an overall participant group of over 1,300 officers. This sampling frame was based on personnel records provided by each force. To be eligible for selection, officers had to:

- be serving police constables (including probationers)
- work in a neighbourhood, specialist or response role
- be a 'regular' user of stop and search in 2014/15
- be available to attend the training and ordinary duties afterwards.

Eligible officers were randomly assigned to either the treatment group (to receive training, n=662) or the control group (to receive no training n=661). The design of the trial, and the methods used to select and assign officers, are detailed by Quinton (2016).

1.2 A brief history of Stop and Search and the creation of the training pilot

Section 1 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) introduced a general national power that enabled the police to search members of the public for stolen or prohibited items where there were 'reasonable grounds for suspicion'.[11] PACE simultaneously sought to authorise, standardise and regulate police practices by repealing the numerous local and national powers that existed previously, the extensive and discriminate use of which was criticised in the Scarman Report (1981) as a major cause of the Brixton riots. Police powers to stop and search were further extended with the introduction of section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, and section 44 of the Terrorism Act 2000 (since repealed), which permitted officers to search members of the public without reasonable grounds when authorised to do so under certain conditions.

Since their introduction, the use of these search powers has been the subject of considerable public debate. The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry (Macpherson, 1999) concluded that the police were institutionally racist, in part, because of the disproportionate searching of people from ethnic minorities. The EHRC (2010 and 2013) has since raised concerns about the excessive and disproportionate use of police search powers. More recently, and prompted by research into the 2011 riots (Lewis et al., 2011), Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC, 2013) examined whether stop and search was being used effectively and fairly by forces, highlighting that 27% of sampled search records did not appear to contain sufficient grounds to justify the search, and that most officers in England and Wales had not received any training on the use of stop and search powers since they completed their recruit training.

In response to the HMIC inspection and a national consultation exercise, the Home Secretary announced a series of reforms, stating that the misuse of stop and search wasted police time, was unfair (especially to young black men), and damaged public confidence. The reform package included the introduction of the 'Best Use of Stop and Search Scheme', which was designed to create 'greater transparency, accountability and community involvement in the use of stop and search powers' through: improvements to data recording; encouraging lay observation of officers on patrol; creating a community-level 'complaint trigger' when there is a high volume of complaints in a specific community; and reducing section 60 searches through a variety of measures (Home Office, 2014a). The voluntary scheme was launched in December 2014 and all forces in England and Wales were expected to participate.

The Home Secretary also announced as part of the reform package that she had commissioned the College to "review the national training of stop and search with a view to developing robust professional

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[11] Before the introduction of PACE, a number of local and specific national stop and search powers existed (e.g. section 23 of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 and section 47 of the Firearms Act 1968, respectively, enabled searches for controlled drugs and firearms when reasonable grounds are present).

standards… [and] unconscious bias awareness training to reduce the possibility of prejudice informing officers' decisions" (Home Office, 2014b).

In response, the College entered into a partnership with the EHRC to develop new National Policing Curriculum learning standards on stop and search, and to design related learning materials for national implementation from 2016/17. A pilot version of this training, which is the focus of this evaluation, is described further at section 1.3.

1.2.1 Political and organisational contexts of stop and search

The development of the training was informed by a number of contextual factors. The history of stop and search demonstrates the socially and politically charged nature of the issue – an issue that continues to draw attention. Police data[12] indicate that, while the number of searches decreased by 40% between 2013/14 and 2014/15,[13] black people continued to be disproportionately stopped and searched compared to white people (Home Office, 2015). Levels of disproportionality, however, also fell since 2013/14. The 'hit rate' – the number of searches resulting in an arrest, also known as 'positive searches' – has also remained low over this time period, but recently started to improve.[14] In 2015, the Supreme Court ruled that section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, which allows random searches, is lawful following a legal challenge brought by a black woman who was searched under the powers (*The Independent*, 2015). The judges argued that stop and search saved black lives by curbing gun and knife crime, which drew strong criticism from civil liberties and campaign groups.[15]

Additionally, organisations involved in the pilot, as well as other police organisations had taken action to improve public perceptions of stop and search. Following the threat of legal action from the EHRC in relation to the disproportionate use of stop and search practice in TVP and Leicestershire, both forces entered formal agreements with the Commission to reduce the number of stop and searches, which have significantly declined since (EHRC, 2010 and 2013). In Northamptonshire, the force has 'removed' the power from any officer found to be misusing it; while the Police and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire, Adam Simmonds, has also advocated that officers misusing the power should apologise to victims face-to-face under a restorative justice model (*The Guardian*, 2015a). More recently, it was reported that the Commissioner of the London Metropolitan Police, Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe, advocated for more targeted stop and search operations in high knife-crime areas of London in response to increased knife crime (*The Guardian*, 2015b). These factors affecting specific forces undoubtedly have an influence over stop and search practice alongside any effects of the training pilot.

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[12] Available at: https://data.police.uk/data/stop-and-search/

[13] Although, some of this decline has been linked to falling numbers of police officers and related strains on manpower to conduct searches (see Delsol and Shiner, 2015).

[14] This was identified by College analysis provided in the Guidance for Trainers document. Eastwood, Shiner and Bear (2015) identify that in 2009/10 the national arrest rate from stop and search was 7%, though in London when other 'hits' (e.g. cautions or other actions rather than arrests) were included this number increased to 18% in 2013.

[15] See for example StopWatch (2015): http://www.stop-watch.org/news-comment/story/supreme-court-rejects-challenge-to-section-60; and Liberty (2015): https://www.liberty-human-rights.org.uk/news/blog/section-60-stop-and-search-discriminatory-destructive-and-doesnt-work

1.3   The training intervention

The training package was developed by the College, with support from the EHRC and also in consultation with police representatives, academics and community leaders, between August 2014 and July 2015 (see Quinton and Packham 2016 for further details). The stated goals of the training were to influence the following outcomes:[16]

- Officer knowledge, attitudes and anticipated behaviours (for example, the degree to which officers followed proper procedure, communicated effectively with people who were being searched, or exhibit bias in their decision to conduct a search);
- The proportion of recorded searches that result in a 'positive outcome' (where searches lead to an item being found and an arrest);
- The quality of the grounds recorded by officers.

To achieve these outcomes, treatment group officers were exposed to a training intervention consisting of:

- self-study through pre-reading materials prior to attending the training, followed by a 'knowledge-check' self-assessment exercise (a short quiz based on the pre-reading) also to be completed in advance; and
- a one-day, face-to-face classroom training course involving up to 12 officers and two trainers.

The national training package was developed in the form of a Guidance for Trainers document which encouraged trainers to use a participatory approach to the training and limit didactic presentation of course content (i.e. a 'frontloaded teaching' method). The Guidance for Trainers was presented to some force-level trainers who attended one of two national 'train-the-trainers' events, who then subsequently developed force-specific lesson plans and trained other trainers at their respective forces to deliver those lesson plans.

The Guidance for Trainers document was not a manual (i.e., a set of clear steps, timings, and content to be provided consistently in each session) and so trainers were encouraged to focus on the areas they felt were most important within the one-day course. Trainers were also expected to adapt the training to fit local circumstances and issues. While it was not originally intended (as force trainers were expected to develop their own approach to the training), in response to requests from trainers, the College also provided trainers with a basic slide pack that could be used to guide the training at force level.

The main areas identified as 'Learning Outcomes' from the Guidance were that officers upon completion of the course should be able to:

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[16] These were identified in the research specification for the process evaluation.

Learning Outcome	Pre-read	Classroom
1. Explain the history surrounding the development and use of stop and search powers	✓	
2. Explain the purpose of stop and search and the benefits of using it correctly and appropriately		✓
3. Outline the different types of police initiated encounters with members of the public		✓
4. Describe the potential adverse impact of a stop and search encounter on the officer, the person being searched and wider society	✓	✓
5. Explain the impact unconscious bias can have on decision making	✓	✓
6. Explain the impact that conscious bias can have on decision making	✓	✓
7. Explain how to establish whether there are reasonable grounds for a lawful stop and search under Code A of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984[17]	✓	✓
8. Describe how people may be considered vulnerable in the context of stop and search	✓	
9. Explain when a stop and search can be conducted under Section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994	✓	
10. Describe the steps that must be taken before a search takes place	✓	✓
11. Explain how stop-searches should be conducted	✓	✓
12. Explain the extent to which individuals can be searched in public	✓	
13. Explain the legal requirement of accurately recording a stop and search encounter	✓	
14. Explain the actions to take when an individual expresses dissatisfaction with a stop and search encounter	✓	

Prior to attending the course, officers were meant to complete a brief pre-read[18] document and learning assessment which covered a number of substantive areas relating to the practice of stop and search in the

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[17] PACE Code A governs the exercise by police officers of their statutory powers of stop and search.

[18] The pre-read included content on: the purpose of stop and search; the definition of a fair and effective stop and search; the types of stop and search powers that police officers can use; considerations an officer should take before

field. Objectives 1, 8, 9, 12, 13 and 14 were meant to be covered entirely by the pre-read, while the remaining objectives were intended to be taught in whole or in part through a classroom component.

Prior to the training pilot, the College published a new working definition of a 'fair and effective' search on 15 August.[19] This was subsequently included in the training package, though only adopted by four of the six participating forces.[20] The definition was as follows:

> A stop and search is most likely to be fair and effective when:
>
> a) the search was a justified and lawful use of the power that stands up to public scrutiny;
> b) the officer genuinely believes the person has an item in their possession;
> c) the member of the public understands why they have been searched and feels that they have been treated with respect;
> d) the search was necessary and was the least intrusive method a police officer could use to establish whether a member of the public has a prohibited article or an item for use in crime with them; and
> e) more often than not the item is found.

This definition differed from past guidance to officers in a number of important ways that will be discussed again later in the report – particularly:

> (a) under this guidance, the officer must 'genuinely believe' an item will be found, where in prior guidance the officer only needed to 'genuinely suspect' (and 'belief' is a higher standard than 'suspicion'); and
>
> (b) the guidance suggests that 'more often than not' a search results in a prohibited item being found (which might suggest a success rate of 50% or better), an expectation that had not previously been set nationally.[21]

Two forces chose not to adopt this definition based on disagreements with the wording of the definition and its potential conflicts with other guidance, an issue that is discussed further in Chapters 3 and 4. Nonetheless, the definition was discussed within the training for those two forces as well, to make officers participating in the training aware of it.

The Guidance for Trainers provided instructions for a set of optional exercises related to one or more objectives, including:

- An 'icebreaker' exercise where officers attending the training were asked to stand up if they'd ever been searched by police, where those who had been searched more times would stay standing

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conducting a search; specific steps that need to be taken before conducting a search; how to conduct a search; the proper recording of a stop and search; and dealing with complaints from citizens involved in stop and search.

[19] The definition was revised after the training pilot, partly due to the findings of the process evaluation.

[20] While the definition technically applied to the whole of the police service in England and Wales, due to disagreements around content and phrasing, certain forces chose not to ask officers to apply the definition to their practice.

[21] Forces may have previously set their own local expectations. For example, the Metropolitan Police Service had a target success rate for finding an item in a search of 20%, well below the 50% implied by the definition.

longer, to encourage discussion of the reasons people may be searched multiple times and the experience of being searched.

- A 'reasonable grounds' exercise where officers were asked to review a set of grounds for search recorded by police, and discuss whether they constituted sufficient grounds.
- Showing and discussing a video called 'Y-Stop', which was co-produced by the organisations Release[22] and StopWatch[23] as a youth education video for young people to know their rights relating to stop and search.
- An unconscious bias exercise, which involved showing officers pictures of (or describing) different kinds of people (e.g. an older person, a Muslim, a black person, a disabled person, a gay person) and asking the officers to record the first characteristics they thought of in relation to that person.
- A role-play or discussion-based exercise where officers consider strategies to elicit cooperation and reduce confrontation when conducting a search with different types of people (such as an aggressive person, a person accusing the officer of being racist, or a group of people). The role-play or discussion of a scenario would then be followed by a debrief (i.e. a participatory discussion facilitated by the trainer, intended to draw out the main points of the exercise).

Given that this was a pilot intervention, the evaluation activities also formed a substantive part of the overall process, as the evaluation is informing the training re-design process that continued after the pilot in preparation of the national roll-out from 2016/17. The process evaluation, presented in this report, has been in place since just before the beginning of the 'train-the-trainers' events and examines a set of process and implementation issues outlined in the next section. After the training, both the treatment and control group officers were assessed against the main training outcomes via an impact evaluation, conducted separately (see Miller and Alexandrou, 2015). Both process and impact evaluations have been used by the College to inform the re-design of the training, and have been brought together in a summary report (see Quinton and Packham, 2016).

The intervention model is summarised in Figure 1.1:

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[22] Release is a 'centre of expertise on drugs and drugs law' that advocates for drug policies based on public health principles. For more information see http://www.release.org.uk/.

[23] StopWatch campaigns against excessive and disproportionate use of stop and search powers by police; for more information see www.stop-watch.org.
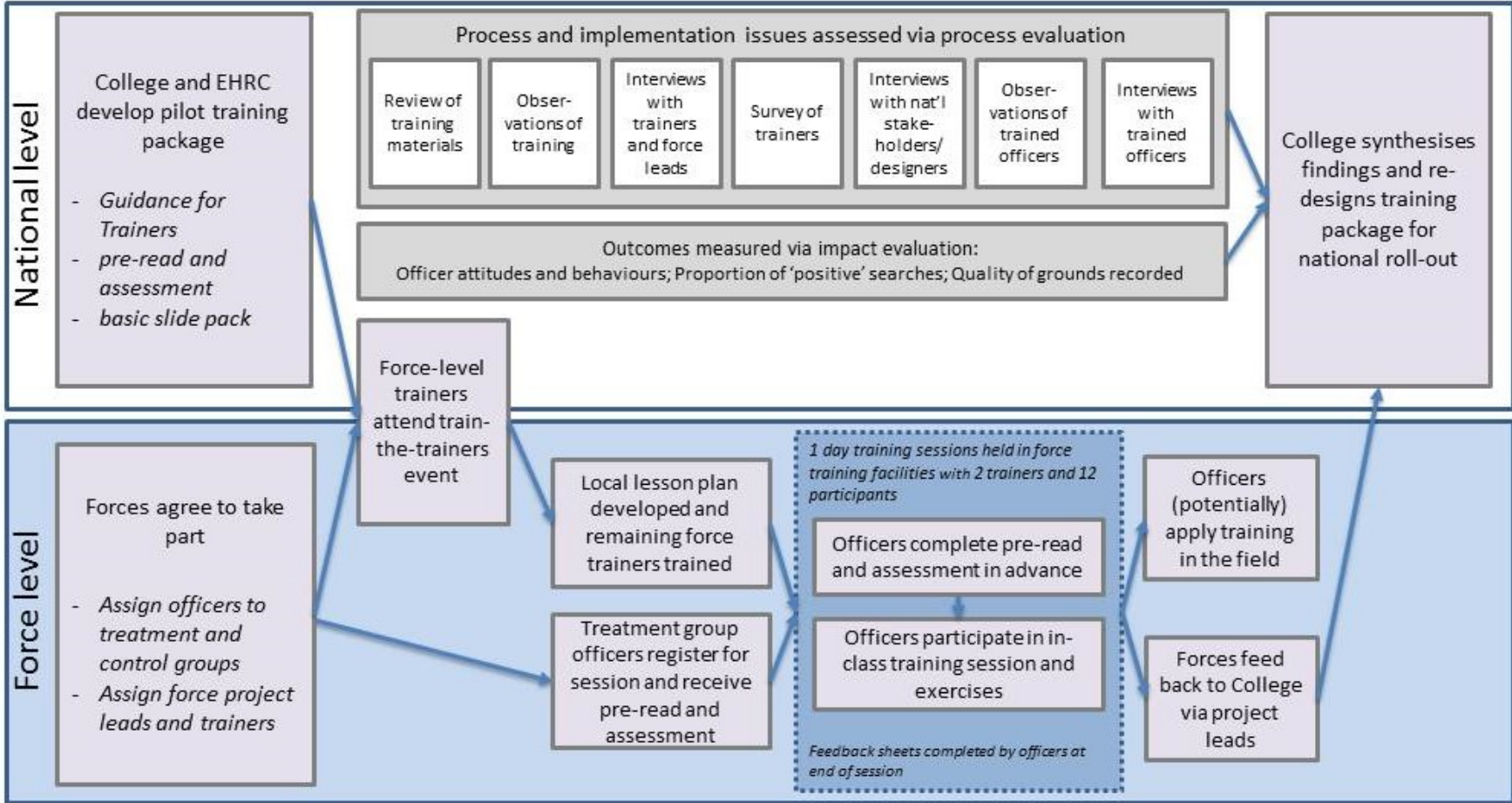
As will be discussed in detail in Chapter 2, the model outlined above left a substantial amount of interpretation to trainers and involved a number of communications channels between the national and force levels, so the model presented above does not reflect all forces' experiences with the pilot implementation.

1.4 Description of the research approach

The College commissioned a process evaluation to explore the development and implementation of new police training on stop and search. As noted above, this was separate from an impact evaluation that assessed the impact of the training against key outcomes relating to officer behaviour, attitudes, and quality of practice. Both process and impact evaluations were conducted in partnership with the College and will feed into the national training re-design and roll-out that is taking place from 2016/17.

Specifically, the process evaluation aimed to examine the quality and nature of implementation, the mechanisms of change, and the context in which they operated through observations of training and interviews with trainees and trainers. This research also aimed to explore the possible impact of the training on the way officers act in order to unpack whether proposed mechanisms of change actually change behaviour, and the nature of police/public interactions during stop and search encounters.

The process evaluation aimed to answer six research questions – four questions examining training implementation, and two examining the behaviour of trained officers:

Training implementation

1. Was the intervention delivered as intended?
2. What were the main implementation issues?
3. To what extent did peers, supervisors, middle managers and senior leaders act as a facilitator or barrier to change?
4. How was the training course perceived by officers, and how did it reportedly influence their stop and search practices?

Officer behaviour

5. Did trained officers appear to apply their learning in practice and, if so, how?
6. How did the police and public interact during encounters after the training, and what factors were associated with better quality encounters?

In order to answer these questions, the research team utilised six main research methods. These were:

(i)   observations of 12 training sessions;

(ii)   in-depth interviews with 18 force-level trainers and project leads;

(iii)   a survey of force-level trainers (with responses from 22 of 28 trainers);

(iv)   in-depth interviews with 6 national-level training designers and project stakeholders;

(v)   in-depth interviews with 30 officers who had received the training; and

(vi)   feedback sheets provided by officers immediately after completing training (with responses from 548 of 662 trained officers).

To examine questions around officer behaviour, the evaluation utilised a systematic social observation (SSO) approach involving quantitative coding and qualitative narratives of treatment-group officers' activities during patrol shifts.[24]

Table 1.1 details the research questions, where in the report these questions are addressed, and the methods used to answer these questions.

Table 1.1: Overview of the research questions, location in this report, and methods used

Research question	Location in this report	Methods used to answer questions
1. Was the intervention delivered as intended?	Chapter 2	Training observations Trainer interviews Survey of trainers Stakeholder interviews
2. What were the main implementation issues?	Chapter 3	Training observations Trainer interviews Survey of trainers Stakeholder interviews
3. To what extent did peers, supervisors, middle managers and senior leaders act as a facilitator or barrier to change?	Chapter 4	Patrol observations (field interviews) Officer interviews Trainer interviews Stakeholder interviews
4. How was the training course perceived by officers, and how did it reportedly influence their stop and search practices?	Chapter 5	Patrol observations (field interviews) Officer interviews Training observations Feedback sheets
5. Did trained officers appear to apply their learning in practice and, if so, how?	Chapter 6	Patrol observations
6. How did the police and public interact during encounters, and what factors were associated with better quality encounters?	Chapter 6	Patrol observations

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[24] The research team originally planned to use body-worn video footage as a supplementary research tool to examine officer behaviour. However, as a result of the low number of clips available, and the clearly non-random nature of their distribution (i.e. officers were able to self-select whether and when to begin recording), these videos were not seen as suitable for use in the evaluation in terms of understanding officer behaviour, and instead increased the number of observation sessions within the project.

All methods outlined below were developed by the research team with direct collaborative input from researchers from the College. In certain cases a staff association representative was allowed to review the methods documents and request modifications to the research approach, and modifications were made where these were germane to the research questions.[25] All research activities were undertaken by a team of researchers including the report's authors and College staff. The analysis and reporting in this document were undertaken entirely by the research team and are independent of the College.

All officers in the trial were given information about the study via their force. The research team also gave officers information sheets in advance of the interviews or patrol observations to explain what was entailed. Their verbal consent to participate was sought and received before the start of the interview or patrol, and their right to withdraw or refuse to take part in the research was reiterated by the researcher. All contributions from police officers were anonymised.

1.4.1 Observations of training sessions

In total, 12 training sessions were observed (two per pilot force), over two months. There were two goals to the observation of training sessions: first, to assess the fidelity of training implementation, and second, to contribute to understanding how training might change officers' behaviour. Training sessions were selected purposively, where possible, ensuring that the observer saw sessions delivered by different trainers, and avoided the first session held at any force (as the first session was seen as a 'test run'). Observers communicated directly with trainers in advance of the training, so trainers were aware of the observer's presence.

As implementation is central to the success of any intervention, it is important to assess implementation systematically (Craig et al., 2008). Two questions should be examined (Dane and Schneider, 1998). First, the evaluation needed to assess the gap between conceptualization of the intervention and its execution, most importantly how and how well the specific components or techniques were delivered. Second, the evaluation assessed whether and to what degree separate groups in the trial received the same treatment or whether the intervention differed within or between areas. This assessment is needed in order to draw conclusions both regarding 'active ingredients' (what in this training is supposed to make a difference?), as well as whether lack of proper implementation contributes to an intervention failing to achieve the desired results.

To ensure rigour in data collection and connect to other research activities, an implementation assessment tool was adapted from a previous study conducted by a member of the research team (Litmanovitz, 2016). This tool aims to move the evaluation beyond a technical checklist, to rather capture "the more elusive aspects of superior implementation" of an educational programme (Gough, 2004: 6). The departure point for this tool is the Blueprints implementation model (Mihalic, 2004), which assesses four main aspects:

- **Adherence**: Was the training delivered as outlined in the trainers' guidance?

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[25] This was primarily the case in relation to the observational methodology, where certain observational categories were modified in response to police concerns. These modifications do not detract from our ability to answer the research questions, however they have resulted in some divergence between the tools used in this study and previous studies measuring the quality of police-citizen interactions.

- **Delivery**: How did the trainers present the material? Was their approach didactic or participatory? How did they respond to challenges from officers attending the training? How did they frame the training and the pilot study?
- **Participation**: How did officers attending the training respond to the trainer, to the course content, and to one another?
- **Exposure**: Which areas identified in the course learning objectives received more/less attention? Which exercises were used? What modifications were made?

The evaluation tool also incorporated aspects specific to police training, such as the profile and background of the trainer and his/her stance among police officers. The tool was aligned with the intervention's learning objectives and core components to allow structured observation of the training session in light of the training's stated objectives and goals. Observations were recorded directly into a paper copy of the implementation tool and then transferred to a Word document and Excel file for subsequent analysis.

1.4.2 Semi-structured interviews with trainers and national stakeholders examining training design and implementation

Researchers conducted semi-structured interviews with 18 force-level trainers and force project leads, out of a total possible sample of 32.[26] The interviews included all force project leads, and the remaining force-level interviews were conducted with trainers who had also been observed in training sessions. Interviews were also conducted with six national training designers and other relevant national stakeholders, and these were identified in consultation with the College. This totalled 24 interviews with force and national level stakeholders in the design and delivery of the intervention.

All interviews were conducted face-to-face or by telephone, depending on circumstances. Interviews were conducted after observations in training, and the questions were designed based on training observations. Interviews were aimed at understanding (i) the classroom training delivery and (ii) the process that was followed from inception of the training design process to its ultimate delivery. Interviews aimed to understand the: communications between trainers, force leads and the training designers; relationships with other stakeholders in the process; and how the aims of the pilot were understood. Interviews lasted between 30 and 90 minutes. Interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed by a professional transcription service for subsequent analysis.

1.4.3 Survey of trainer and force project lead perceptions of implementation

A brief survey was designed by the College in collaboration with the research team and was distributed via the College's ClassApps web-based survey system after the training had been completed. This survey sought categorical, scale and free-text responses on trainers' opinions of the support provided by the College, the value of the training to officers, and any areas they thought were particularly well or poorly

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[26] 28 trainers, two of whom were also force project leads, as well as four force project leads who were not also trainers.

received. The full results are provided at Appendix B. In total, 22 valid responses were received from the survey, out of a possible 28 trainer or force lead respondents. Of these respondents, 14 had a role in training development (e.g. attending the national 'train-the-trainers' sessions, developing force-specific activities), while eight were solely involved in training delivery at the force level.

1.4.4 Semi-structured interviews with treatment group officers about their experience of the training

Researchers conducted semi-structured interviews with 30 officers who received the training, five from each force participating in the pilot. These officers did not participate in the field observations. Officers were purposively selected in consultation with the single points of contact (SPOCs) identified at each force, who sought to identify officers from across roles (neighbourhood, response, and specialist officers) and levels of experience. As with the trainer interviews, interviews with officers were conducted in person or by phone, after observations in training and patrol, and the questions were designed based on field experience. Interviews with officers looked into (a) what officers felt the main messages of the training were; (b) how well training was delivered; (c) what, if anything, was seen as particularly valuable, and also (d) whether they believed their behaviour had or could change as a result, and if so why/why not. These interviews were audio-recorded and lasted between 30 and 60 minutes in length. Audio-recordings were subsequently transcribed by a professional transcription service for subsequent analysis.

1.4.5 Feedback sheets completed by treatment group officers after the training

At the conclusion of each training session, officers were asked to complete brief feedback sheets evaluating aspects of the course delivery such as speed, length and value of the in-class content; the quality and usefulness of the training materials such as the pre-read and knowledge check; how this training compared with any previous training on stop and search; and to what degree the training had improved the officers' understanding across key learning objectives. The data from the feedback sheets were collated and cleaned by the College, and descriptive statistics from these sheets were provided by College researchers to the research team. Results from the feedback sheets are reported where relevant within the report.

1.4.6 Observations of police patrols

Observations were undertaken with treatment group officers in all forces to observe both stop and search and wider relevant encounters. In undertaking observations, the research team was aware that there could be relatively few direct observation of searches, as the use of stop and search powers in recent years has decreased and is not a high-volume activity for most police officers in England and Wales. Nonetheless, observations were undertaking to examine wider encounters with members of the public suspected of criminal or disorderly behaviour (whether or not a search was conducted), in a way that was intended to provide information relevant to stop and search practice and police encounters with the public more generally. The observations also provided for 'field interviews' with treatment group officers, which could be contextualised within actual day-to-day activities.

To facilitate this, a systematic social observation (SSO) protocol was developed based on earlier studies of police discretion carried out in the UK and US (Jonathan-Zamir et al., 2015; Mastrofski et al., 1998,

2012, 2016; Quinton, 2011; Quinton et al., 2000). The instrument and protocol were designed to ensure that observers were as systematic as possible in their data collection and recording. Further, the protocol sought to minimise observer effects, encourage recall and facilitate writing detailed, accurate narratives describing what happened.

For observations of police patrol, observers accompanied police officers on patrol shifts, observing their interactions with members of the public while taking brief notes. Within 48 hours, observers wrote detailed narratives following precise guidelines, which document these interactions. The particular police behaviours (and behaviours of people stopped by police, who we refer to as 'suspects' in that they are suspected of criminal or disorderly activity) that were of interest were then recorded quantitatively by responding to three closed-ended questionnaires: one about the shift overall (including officer-related information); one about each encounter the officer had during the shift; and one about each interaction with a specific member of the public within the encounter. Thus, this method of recording allows for both qualitative and quantitative analyses, and both data sets are characterised by precision and independence (Mastrofski et al., 2010).

Data collected from the observations were able to answer four specific questions:

- **Frequency**: How often do police-initiated encounters of different types occur (e.g. informal conversations, pedestrian stops where people are held to account by the officer, vehicle stops, and searches)?
- **Officer behaviour:** To what extent are officers' actions before, during and after encounters in line with the College learning standards (e.g. PACE Code A, GOWISELY)?
- **Barriers/facilitators –** When are officers more (and less) likely to initiate encounters and carry them out in line with the College learning standard? What features of the officer, suspect and situation affect this outcome? What wider contextual issues may also be relevant?
- **The citizen's perspective –** How do people generally respond to police officers initiating interactions with them? How do they respond to stop and search encounters? Which factors are associated with apparent satisfaction and dissatisfaction at the end of the encounter for the person who was stopped?

For the final question around citizen perspective, the observation tool employed a procedural justice-oriented lens, which examines specific aspects of police encounters with members of the public that are normally empirically correlated with higher levels of citizen satisfaction within these encounters (Mastrofski et al., 2016). Procedural justice is "the fairness of the procedures authorities use to deal with a situation" (Mastrofski et al., 2016: 120) and is traditionally measured along four axes: participation, neutrality, dignity, and trustworthy motives (Mastrofski et al., 2016; see also Mazerolle et al., 2012). These axes are reflected in the observational items in the research protocol, although owing to modifications required for field access with police, certain items differ from previous studies using similar methods. The observational approach is further outlined in Chapter 6 and Appendix C.

The research team conducted a total of 30 observations (five per force). Invitations to SPOCs at each of the forces were sent by the research team, requesting to observe a range of officers who had attended the training, across a range of shifts. In order to obtain a broadly representative sample of stop and search encounters, the requests specified different:

- days of the week – weekdays and weekends
- hours of the day – with a focus on late and night shifts in order to account for a higher proportion of stop and searches taking place during these hours
- types of officer – ideally x2 neighbourhood, x2 response, and x1 more specialist officers (e.g. traffic and proactive)
- locations – particularly in the MPS where four Operational Command Units participated, and BTP which covers England and Wales

SPOCs selected officers within these constraints, and on the basis of their availability. As participation in the research was voluntary, officers who would not want to participate were not observed. The impact of this self-selection bias on the data is unknown. We attempted to ensure that there was a sufficient diversity of officers included in the process evaluation, due to technical constraints and the limited time frame this was not always possible. In turn, this limits our ability to generalise the findings to the wider population of officers, and the limitations of the sample are explored further below as well as in Chapter 5.

Observations were intended to last the entire duration of the shift, from the shift briefing to the end of public-facing duties. In order to minimise observer effect, the officers were assured anonymity and confidentiality, and were encouraged by the observer to behave naturally.

Data collected in these observations included basic information such as the time of day, number of members of the public on scene, and the actions of both the officer and the suspect, and insight into the observed officer's decision-making process using:

- short debriefs after each encounter concerning the officer's decision making in that particular encounter (e.g. how/why the officer decided to carry out a search); and
- directed conversations with the officer throughout the shift about the training more generally.

Data was captured through a combination of detailed qualitative narratives and coded quantitative data using a mobile app. The quantitative coding entailed recording detailed information about encounters in order to systematically observe police-initiated encounters, including (but not exclusively) stop and searches. The mobile app was Forms by DeviceMagic, which has previously been used in an observational study of police officers (Giacomantonio et al., 2015). This allowed observers to record categorical, scale, free text and date/time data via mobile phone or tablet during or after a shift, and takes the place of paper coding sheets normally used in SSO studies. The app is detailed further at Appendix B.

The narratives aimed to provide as much details as possible about what happened throughout the shift and in specific encounters (what the officer said, how the suspect or other members of the public present responded, what happened next). Narratives also included details of 'field interviews' conducted with officers, whereby observers were instructed to ask officers questions relating specifically to the training pilot as well as their broader experiences with and opinions about stop and search powers.

1.4.7 Notes on analysis and reporting of qualitative findings

Qualitative data collected through each method was analysed by the research team against each of the main research questions. Team members worked in pairs and each pair was assigned a qualitative dataset

(with one pair examining the training implementation data from training observations, interviews with trainers and national stakeholders, and surveys with trainers; and another pair looking at officer interviews, field interviews and feedback sheets). Each pair produced initial findings documents outlining findings from their datasets relevant to each research question. The pairs then worked collectively to synthesise the messages into the main chapters of this report, and consider the main areas of agreement and disagreement between datasets in terms of the messages emerging from the qualitative data.

Additionally, after initial analysis of the qualitative findings, the research team prepared an interim findings briefing for an assembled group of 15 national stakeholders and designers. This was presented on 7 December 2015 at a workshop at the College of Policing, and the feedback received in that workshop was used to refine the messages from the interim briefing to the current report.

To preserve anonymity, in the following where quotes or ideas are attributed to police officers, trainers, stakeholders, or from specific observations in training or patrol contexts, these are identified by the context of the individual or observation using a randomly assigned number. All trainers and force leads are identified as 'trainers' for anonymity purposes, although it should be noted that while not all force leads were trainers, they were answering similar questions as the trainers. National stakeholders and designers are identified as 'designers' since all stakeholders had at least a peripheral role in the design process as well. Police officers are identified as officer interviewees, and field or training observations are identified as such, normally in a footnote.

1.5 Limitations

As a process evaluation of an RCT focused solely on those receiving the new training, the results in this report are informed by evidence from the various methods used, but cannot lay claim to any causal effects. The role of the process evaluation is to describe *whether* and *how* the intervention was implemented, the views of those giving and receiving training and how the training was received and potentially used by officers receiving it. These are essential steps in helping to develop the training further and allow the College to make informed decisions about how to undertake further development.

It should also be noted that the officers who participated in the training were aware that they were taking part in a pilot, and were in the treatment group. (In the language of RCTs they were not 'blinded' to the intervention.) This knowledge could have impacted their performance irrespective of the content of the training they received (sometimes referred to as a 'Hawthorne effect'). Likewise, these officers routinely interact and work with officers who did not participate in the training (the control group). Therefore, each group may have affected the performance of the officers in the other group, working to minimise differences between them. Further, as noted above, this particular area of police activity receives substantial public scrutiny and so officers' interpretations of the purpose of the intervention (i.e. their beliefs about why it was being conducted, and how they were expected to respond to the training and to the evaluators) were likely to have been influenced by the wider debates on stop and search powers.

Despite the steps taken to minimise observer effect, the presence of the research team during the observations may have influenced the behaviour of both officers and members of the public. In addition, the choice of which officers participated in field observations and interviews was made by the forces

involved in the evaluation via SPOCs, and rested on the availability and willingness of officers to participate. This non-random selection – and lack of knowledge about what influenced officer selection into the evaluation – limits the ability to generalise findings beyond this research project. As well, due to last-minute scheduling changes due to officer unavailability, some officers were recruited to participate in the observations and interviews without being properly briefed on the process evaluation and its objectives.

2 Was the intervention delivered as intended?

This chapter answers research question 1: Was the intervention delivered as intended? It focuses on data from the training observation sessions, interviews with force leads and trainers, the online survey of the trainers, and interviews with national stakeholders in the design process.

2.1 There was general agreement on high-level goals of the training, however how these were to be achieved in practice lacked clarity

As outlined in Chapter 1, the training had three stated goals – to improve officer knowledge attitudes and behaviour; to improve the arrest rate from searches, and to improve the quality of grounds recorded by officers who conduct a search. These goals were generally reflected in interviews with designers and national stakeholders, alongside additional goals relating to reducing levels of race disproportionality, and in all likelihood (as a consequence of these changes) decrease the overall use of stop and search powers. This was summed up succinctly by one national designer, referring in an interview to a project objective document:

> So our aim [with the training] is to build capacity in the police to meet its suggested duties, and improve police understanding in equality and human rights concepts, including addressing potentially discriminatory behaviour and inequalities. And to improve the quality and effectiveness of policing encounters with a particular emphasis on the reduction of bias, improved interactive quality and targeting. (Designer interview 4)

At the national level, there also appeared to be general agreement on the drive for a cultural shift through the training:

> [The training is] supposed to, if anything, address the culture and approach to stop and search as opposed to simply being a very staid re-connect with legislation. It's not intended to be a legal input on these are your powers, this is how you use them. (Designer interview 1)

> I would say what we're trying to achieve from delivering training to frontline officers is to get them to think about their use of stop-search powers before they use them… to get them to think about it because many of them don't think about it, don't think about the consequences, don't think about the impact. (Designer interview 2)

While in general there was some high-level agreement, this appears to mask meaningful differences in understandings of what the overall goals of cultural change were in the eyes of the national designers, and how they might be achieved. For example, for one national designer, the main area for improvement from

the training was 'in terms of raising the level at when we intercede with stop and search beyond PACE Code A;[27] for another national designer the area that needed improvement was 'of policing encounters with a particular emphasis on the reduction of bias and improved interactive quality',[28] and for another it was essentially refresher training in response to a 'status quo' where the quality of use of stop and search had declined across the board.[29] It is also clear from designer interviews that there were differences of opinion between designers in how extensively role-play was to be used, and in the end only one force used role-play extensively, while one other used it briefly relating to the use of GOWISELY.

2.2 The problems that the training aimed to solve were not understood or presented consistently by trainers

It is worth recognising that consistent and clear understandings of the goals of a pilot initiative are the exception rather than the norm in a wide range of public policy areas, and many pilot initiatives have multiple implicit and explicit goals, which can often be seen differently by different stakeholder groups (see for example Ettelt, Mays and Allen, 2015). As such the differences in understandings of this pilot at the national level are not atypical.

Nonetheless, inconsistency at the national level about the purpose(s) of the training appears to have translated through to the force level and may underpin the variations between the designers' intentions and the products delivered in the six forces. For example, of the 14 survey respondents who helped with training development, eight rated the College's communication about the training as 'fair' (6 respondents), 'poor' (1) or 'very poor' (1), with five respondents rating it as 'good' and none rating it as 'excellent'.[30] Trainer survey respondents had somewhat better assessment of the College's communication of the evaluation aspect of the pilot, with more than half rating it 'good' (7) or 'excellent' (1).[31] Nonetheless, trainer interviews also highlighted the communications issues surrounding the pilot and the purpose of the training, as reflected in their differing understandings of the main goals of the training.

For force trainers, their understandings of the main goals for improvement as identified in interviews varied. Perhaps the most consistent – but by no means universal – perception of the training was as a refresher course. In many sessions observed, the trainers framed the training as a refresher session or otherwise highlighted at the outset that it was going to cover material 'already known' to officers attending the training, an interpretation which was also reflected in the interviews with the officers themselves. The notion of the course as a refresher is in line with HMIC's recommendations that training

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[27] Designer interview 6.

[28] Designer interview 4.

[29] Designer interview 2.

[30] In response to survey question 4: 'Overall, how good do you think the College's communication was about the training?'

[31] In response to survey question 5: 'Overall, how good do you think the College's communication was about the evaluation?'

be developed, as most officers had not received training since their recruit days and a refresher may have served to increase overall quality of use of stop and search powers.

The understanding of the course as a refresher may explain why, for example, trainers chose to limit discussion on legislation or common law (which was rarely discussed in-depth), as this was 'assumed knowledge' within the training design. The framing of the training as a refresher was also offered as a reason in one force why role-play was not used (though most did not use role-play, only one offered this justification), since it was thought that officers taking the training would have had adequate prior experience of stopping and searching, and that any role-play might seem condescending or remedial.

In contrast, trainers in two forces framed the training as primarily introducing new material aimed at changing officer behaviour, and while recognising that some content was likely to be 'refresher' material, the goal of the training was presented in those cases as something intended to change how officers view and operationalise stop and search practice.

Even where training was considered largely 'refresher' in orientation, there were three notable exceptions that were generally considered 'new' content. First, training observations suggested that officers participating in the training in most instances were unaware of the smell of cannabis 'rule' (i.e. that smell of cannabis alone is insufficient grounds for a search), and this became a touchstone for extensive discussion in a number of the observed sessions, covered further under section 2.2.[32] Second, for the four forces in the pilot that had not had recent unconscious bias training,[33] this was a new concept, although generated more limited discussion as outlined below. Finally, the new 'fair and effective' definition, which was presented in some way in all forces, was new guidance for officers (though only being followed in four of six, the other two acknowledged to their officers that this definition was being considered as a potential shift in guidance). In one force, the definition had been shared with officers in advance of the training during briefings, while in others the definition was essentially 'new' to officers, though many appeared in training sessions to have heard about the definition through colleagues in advance of attending, or through its original publication in August 2015.

Other perceived goals included for example improving the quality of grounds recorded by officers; as one stated:

> The majority of [searches] are already fair and effective searches, so for us [the goal of training] was you need to put more reasoning down for why you are doing it in the first place etc. (Trainer interview 18)

In contrast, a trainer from another force felt that the training 'is definitely going to raise the bar in respect of thinking about how [officers] engage with the community,'[34] so felt the training was primarily meant

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[32] This 'rule' was only touched on briefly in the Guidance for Trainers, and in relation to the examples recommended for use in reasonable grounds exercise.

[33] BTP and the Metropolitan Police reported having recently had unconscious bias training, but in other forces this was identified as a 'new' area.

[34] Trainer interview 9.

to focus on engagement rather than grounds. The lack of clarity was also related to whether the training was 'new' or 'refresher' in orientation, and was summed up nicely in one trainer interview, as follows:

> Interviewer: Is there anything that the College could have done better do you think?

> Interviewee: I suppose one of the things that I'm slightly unclear about is the whole purpose of the pilot, is that a full package for new officers or is it for continuation training? (Trainer interview 1)

Most trainers interviewed for the evaluation recognised that there is, or at least has recently been, some form of 'problem' with the overall use of stop and search powers in England and Wales. However, the nature of this problem was not uniformly understood or described, and in turn the problem that the training seeks to solve was not consistently understood by force trainer interviewees. While nine of 14 trainer survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that 'the learning outcomes of the training were clear' and 11 of 14 felt the reasons for the training pilot were clear, the trainers appear based on the interviews to have, nonetheless, interpreted these objectives differently.

From observations of the framing of the training, the following rationales were offered by trainers. These rationales were often discussed in conjunction with one another and rarely with a clear statement of the paramount objective:

- **To address a training gap and/or skills fade[35]** – Trainers suggested that most police officers will not have had refresher training on stop and search since their recruit training, while much has changed in recent years in how these powers can be used. For instance, on a number of courses there were officers in attendance with over 20 years' experience who had not re-trained on stop and search powers since their recruit training.

- **To improve the 'hit rate'** – As noted earlier, most searches end up being 'negative' searches, and the trainers felt that the long term goal should be to find the item being searched for more often than not. This may also involve decreasing the number of searches conducted overall. To substantiate this point, some trainers provided officers with statistics on their own force's stop and search rates and the numbers of successful searches, to show a gap between current and ideal practice.

- **To encourage a more thoughtful or reflective approach to stop and search** – In introducing the training, some trainers suggested that a goal of the training was less to promote a specific outcome and more to encourage a more considered approach to using the power. This meant not only reminding officers of the parameters of reasonable grounds, but also encouraging a 'stop-and-think' approach to stop and search, and considering alternatives even where grounds for a search exist.

- **To avoid losing stop and search powers** – While most trainers in interviews suggested that there was no realistic chance that the powers would be removed, statements by the Home Secretary in 2014 and steps taken in Northamptonshire in 2015 to instruct specific officers not to

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[35] In adult education literature, 'skills fade' (see e.g. Leonard, 2007) relates to the gradual loss of a skill from non-use of the skill or potentially inadequate or limited initial training.

use their powers, led trainers in at least four forces to emphasise during their introduction that the powers were under threat of removal or curtailment.

While these are not necessarily contradictory purposes or motivations, it is not clear that all of the goals emerging from these discussions could be addressed – with concrete skills suitable for 'real-world' application – within the same course. Part of the issue may have to do with course length: covering each of these goals in a six-hour course may have been overly-ambitious. As is explored further below, a number of ideas perceived by designers to be central to the training – such as those relating to bias or procedural justice – were not covered in-depth in the training sessions observed, which suggests that time was inadequate to cover all relevant material. Further, few courses were able to find time to include role-play activities or extended debriefing for exercises. It is worth noting that while many trainers and stakeholders believed that the course length of one day was 'about right' given constraints on officer time, a minority of trainers expressed concern about the length and virtually all recognised that the course length required prioritising some areas of instruction over others.

Interestingly, many of the comments emerging from the survey of trainers suggested that the refresher aspect of the course, particularly an opportunity to fine-tune grounds and understandings of PACE Code A, was seen as valuable in the training and that a future course should prioritise these aspects. Of the 18 respondents who provided comments to the question, "Can you please briefly describe what learning needs you think national stop and search training should prioritise?", 11 responses highlighted the legal basis for search and/or reasonable grounds as main priority areas. Nine respondents included interpersonal skills, for example empathy, dealing with bias, and developing rapport.

2.3 The trainers provided a 'good-faith', if varied, interpretation of the training and attempted to reflect the intentions of the pilot in their sessions

The interviews with trainers and observations of training suggest strongly that trainers attempted to work with what was given to them by the College and implement it faithfully within their understanding of the intentions of the training. Trainers from all forces described efforts they made to design and deliver a lesson plan that would reflect the Guidance for Trainers and what they understood the College required, to a high standard in a limited amount of time, for example saying:

> We took what the College wanted; we worked on that basis of what the College was asking. All of the guidance, and the documentation that the College wanted featured in our training package. (Trainer interview 7)

This attempt to provide the training in line with the College's intentions is reflected in the relatively low level of modifications made to the training materials reported at the local level. In the survey response to the question, 'Did the training that was delivered locally differ from the Guidance for Trainers?', only one trainer indicated that their force made major changes to the training package (relating to the omission of the 'fair and effective' definition), with 10 indicating minor changes and three indicating no changes whatsoever.

While there were differences in delivery, the only other major modification identified during the observations was the addition, in one force, of an introduction at the beginning and debrief session at end of each training day. This addition was outside the scope intended by the national designers. During these, an inspector discussed a wide variety of issues with the officers, including their opinions on the stop and search training and the policy directions implied by the training. The inspector also expressed their own opinions on these topics, and was often sceptical of the training pilot's value. As these sessions were being led by a more senior officer, the content from this additional activity may have influenced the opinions and subsequent behaviour of officers from that specific force.

Interestingly, the majority of trainers interviewed in all forces voiced very positive opinions about the final outcome, and were generally pleased with the product they ended up delivering. Trainers were encouraged through the 'train-the-trainers' events to vary their approach to accommodate assumed local knowledge and fit into local context, so variation is potentially non-problematic from that perspective. However, it appears from the survey responses and interviews that variation was less a matter of tailoring to local sensibilities and more a matter of differing understandings about what the training was meant to accomplish.

As discussed above, and further under section 2.2, some trainers lacked clarity on the purpose of the training and often found the guidance they received (in documentation, and at the 'train-the-trainers' events) unclear. In the survey, five of 13 valid responses reported that they did not have a good understanding of what the College expected. Amongst trainer interviewees, even where they felt confident in the general goals of the training, expressed confusion at specific parts such as the 'fair and effective' definition and the smell of cannabis 'rule'.

This lack of clarity appears to have led to the mixed messages in delivery of the training that are highlighted in this chapter. Nonetheless, while most trainers did at one time or another express scepticism about the purpose of the training or the severity of the problems associated with stop and search, especially during the introduction sections and framing (discussed further in Chapter 3), from their perspective they were trying to provide something of value to officers attending the training within the parameters set by the College.

In terms of variation and consistency, the training approach appeared from observations and interviews to be consistent *within* each force; while a number of trainers said that they made changes to the training approach after their initial session, most reported no other changes for the remainder of their sessions following initial revisions. However, there was substantial variation *between* forces in their approach in terms of the tone and structure of, and balance of activities in, each session.

Perhaps the clearest way to illustrate these variations is through the structured observations that took place during training sessions, in which observers recorded data around how much attention was given to the main learning objectives. As first noted in the introduction, the learning objectives identified in the Guidance for Trainers document were as follows:

Learning Outcome	Pre-read	Classroom
1. Explain the history surrounding the development and use of stop and search powers	✓	
2. Explain the purpose of stop and search and the benefits of using it correctly and appropriately		✓
3. Outline the different types of police initiated encounters with members of the public		✓
4. Describe the potential adverse impact of a stop and search encounter on the officer, the person being searched and wider society	✓	✓
5. Explain the impact unconscious bias can have on decision making	✓	✓
6. Explain the impact that conscious bias can have on decision making	✓	✓
7. Explain how to establish whether there are reasonable grounds for a lawful stop and search under Code A of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984	✓	✓
8. Describe how people may be considered vulnerable in the context of stop and search	✓	
9. Explain when a stop and search can be conducted under Section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994	✓	
10. Describe the steps that must be taken before a search takes place	✓	✓
11. Explain how stop-searches should be conducted	✓	✓
12. Explain the extent to which individuals can be searched in public	✓	
13. Explain the legal requirement of accurately recording a stop and search encounter	✓	
14. Explain the actions to take when an individual expresses dissatisfaction with a stop and search encounter	✓	

Using these categories, the observers estimated the relative amount of time spent on each area. Figure 2.1 identifies which objectives received more than 15 minutes of coverage, less than 15 minutes of coverage, or were not covered in the session across the 12 observed training sessions:[36]

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[36] Observers recorded whether an objective received no coverage, less than 5 minutes, 5 to 15 minutes, 16 to 30 minutes or greater than 30 minutes. These have been collapsed into three categories for ease of visual interpretation.

Figure 2.1: Coverage of learning objectives across 12 different training sessions

Learning objective (*asterisk denotes objective intended for pre-read only)
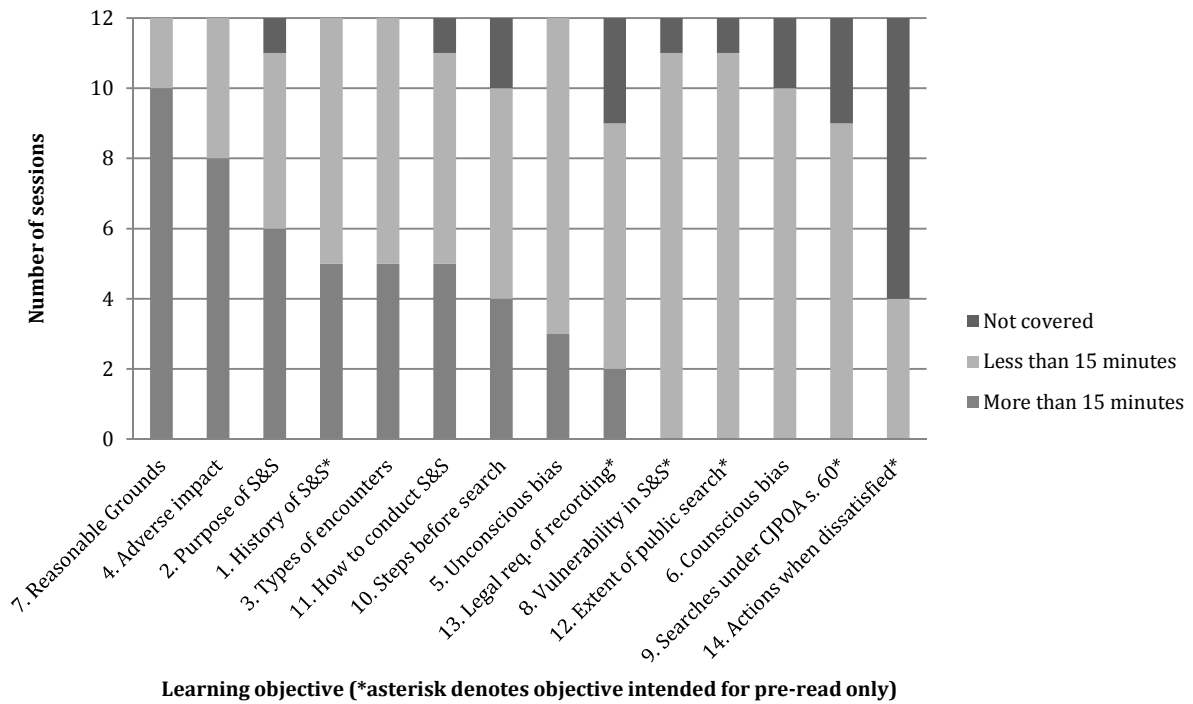
This figure provides an indication regarding which areas received the most and least attention during training sessions. It also shows that a number of areas not meant to be discussed in the classroom setting at any length were in fact regularly presented in the classroom and sometimes at length. This is most notable around discussions of the history of stop and search, which was given more than 15 minutes' coverage in five sessions and was covered in all sessions, despite being a pre-read only activity. It is worth recognising that an historical timeline of stop and search is included in the Guidance for Trainers for in-class learning in one section and for pre-read in another, so this suggests incongruence within the Guidance document that could have created inconsistencies, rather than an error by trainers.

Figure 2.1 also raises a number of questions surrounding the implication of focusing on certain aspects of the training over others – for example, around the predominant focus on reasonable grounds and limited focus on conscious bias, which are dealt with in the subsections below.

2.4 The training delivery focused on improving practical legal decision-making and improving recording of reasonable grounds

Most of the observed training sessions focused predominantly (in terms of time allocated in slides and content of discussions) on issues around:

- identifying reasonable grounds that would hold up in court (including the reasonable grounds exercise from the guidance appendix),

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It is worth noting that 15 minutes is a somewhat arbitrary demarcation, though we may use this as a proxy for the level of depth in coverage received by an objective.

- ensuring procedure was appropriately followed (e.g. review of GOWISELY), and
- discussing the extent of public search (e.g. through review of the JOG acronym[37]).

Indeed, reasonable grounds received more than 15 minutes of coverage in 10 of 12 sessions, and often received over an hour of classroom attention as a result of discussions ensuing from reasonable grounds-related exercises. Issues around what to do to in terms of compliance with PACE Code A tended to generate the most discussion among officers in class (e.g. what does and does not represent reasonable grounds, under what conditions can a search take place, etc.).

This may be because legal compliance was a more comfortable space for discussion for both trainers and officers, and indeed in survey responses all 19 trainers who reported using the reasonable grounds exercise from the guidance felt that officers were 'very' or 'fairly' engaged with this aspect of the training, [38] and 15 of 22 trainers[39] surveyed suggested that this was an area of training to which officers were most receptive.[40] Furthermore, a focus on reasonable grounds, the better recording of grounds, and compliance with relevant legislation appears to be a plausible interpretation of the goals reflected in the guidance, so trainers may have believed that this was a primary focal point for the training. It is interesting to note that improvement of legal compliance was not predominantly identified by trainers as among the main goals of the training (as discussed above under section 2.2) though it is not possible to know from the data why this apparent contradiction was observed.

2.5 Unconscious bias featured in all training sessions, albeit briefly and not always effectively

As shown in Figure 2.1, all training sessions featured discussion of unconscious bias and in all cases this was done through a version of the unconscious bias exercise included in the guidance. This exercise involved the trainer showing pictures of different people, and officers would write down the first word that came to their head. Some trainers then asked the officers to share the word they wrote, while others did not ask for this (and in one force, the officers only said the word rather than write it down).

Observations in training sessions showed that in most sessions, after the initial review of responses and a brief discussion around biases in general, very little further elaboration of the concept took place specifically in the context of its relevance to, and implications for, officers' stop and search practices. In survey responses, only six of 22 respondents suggested that officers were particularly receptive to this

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[37] This is an acronym for the extent of a less-intrusive search, involving only Jacket, Outer garments and Gloves of the person being searched.

[38] In response to question 19: 'In general, how engaged or disengaged do you think officers were in each of the following elements of the classroom training?'

[39] In response to question 21: 'In your view, which of the following learning outcomes were officers generally most receptive to?'

[40] These and other responses relating to the engagement of officers attending the training may need to be interpreted with a degree of caution, however, given that trainers may not wish to give a suggestion that their pedagogy was poorly received.

material,[41] and a similar number of trainers (seven of 22) felt this was an area to which officers were *least* receptive.[42] While nine of 16 trainers said officers were 'fairly engaged' or 'very engaged' with this content, five of 16 trainers who reported using the photo exercise suggested that officers were 'fairly disengaged' with this content,[43] which was the highest proportion of disengagement reported for any of the areas of classroom instruction.

Including the exercise and discussion, unconscious bias was covered for 15 minutes or less in nine of 12 sessions observed. This appears to be in contrast to the expectations at the national level; three national designers felt that addressing unconscious bias was among the main goals of the training,[44] however observations at the 'train-the-trainers' events and discussions with force trainers suggest that the direction given to trainers was that they did not need to spend a substantive amount of time on unconscious bias:

> [W]hen we went down [to train the trainers], and [the College] said you don't need to bang on the big drum about [unconscious bias] really and get it across short and sweet and hopefully it will get the message across, so that's what I did. (Trainer interview 11)

Many trainers felt that the unconscious bias exercise was useful and helped to challenge officers to think about bias. In the survey, 11 of 16 trainers who used the unconscious bias exercise felt it was 'very' (4 interviewees) or 'fairly' (7) useful.[45] However, only four of 18 trainers identified bias as a priority area for national roll-out.[46] In at least two of the forces, standalone unconscious bias training had previously been delivered, so this focus of the stop and search training may not have been seen to add much value. One trainer from one of those forces with existing bias training felt the version offered in the pilot training 'fell flat':

> [W]henever you teach unconscious bias the learning issue has to be how you overcome it, and I don't think that was sold strongly enough. I think the… overriding feeling at the end of that part of the session was "I have just been tested; it's almost like the trainers wanted me to say something inappropriate," and so you measured from that that their responses were so guarded that it fell flat really. (Trainer interview 14)

Observers across forces noted that, while the exercise introduced the concept of bias, no discernible tools were offered in sessions to help officers address or overcome unconscious bias. While the concept of unconscious bias was clearly identified, the training did not offer insight into how this recognition of the

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[41] In response to question 21: 'In your view, which of the following learning outcomes were officers generally most receptive to?'

[42] In response to question 22: 'In your view, which of the following learning outcomes were officers generally least receptive to?'

[43] In response to question 19: 'In general, how engaged or disengaged do you think officers were in each of the following elements of the classroom training?'

[44] Designer interviews 2, 3 and 4.

[45] In response to question 18: 'Overall, how useful do you think each of the following elements of the classroom training were?'

[46] In response to question 24: 'Can you please briefly describe what learning needs you think national stop and search training should prioritise?'

concept was meant to improve officer behaviour post-training beyond greater awareness of this issue. As a result, without 'tools' to help those trained to discuss this issue with colleagues, it seems unlikely that this would have traction beyond the intervention setting.

Additionally, the concept of conscious bias was rarely discussed in any depth, and was often subsumed into the discussions about unconscious bias without substantial effort to differentiate the two concepts. However, this may not be surprising, as the Guidance for Trainers offered more guidance on unconscious bias than conscious bias, where unconscious bias is covered over two pages plus and appendix, while conscious bias is covered for a half-page.

2.6 Ideas of procedural justice were not central to training despite being supported by wider research

The Guidance for Trainers outlined a number of points that are clearly informed by theories of procedural justice (e.g. the role-play exercise) and the background information for trainers includes procedural justice-oriented content. Additionally, it was reported by national training designers that an explicit focus on procedural justice was considered in the training design.[47] However, in the final design of the Guidance for Trainers procedural justice principles are presented in a subtle manner rather than explicitly. Consequently, while observers were instructed during training observations to be alert for whether and to what degree procedural justice principles were reflected in the training, in all sessions the coverage of procedural justice principles (such as the importance of citizen participation in an interaction, perceived neutrality of the officer, treating members of the public with dignity, and showing trustworthy motives) were presented within other topics and never in a coherent fashion tying together these aspects.

For example, dignity may have emerged as part of a discussion on the adverse impacts of a search, or neutrality may have featured in discussions around unconscious bias in the choice to commence a search or stop a member of the public. Vague notions of procedural justice were used to frame the training ("we have the public's support but it diminishes if we are unfair or ineffective"[48]) or when discussing how to carry out a search and the consequences of 'bad' searches ("we want to make sure they understood, and they want [your grounds] to be reasonable").[49] However, a clear and coherent articulation of procedural justice principles was not observed in any training session, though this is not particularly surprising given their limited coverage in the final version of the Guidance for Trainers used in the pilot.

2.7 All training sessions used a primarily participatory adult-education approach

Adult Education is concerned with understanding how adults learn and helping to improve their learning (Knowles, 1980). Adults learn throughout their lives, with experiential learning playing a crucial role,

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[47] Designer interviews 1 and 2.

[48] Training observation 8

[49] Training observation 9

especially through the interconnection between learning and everyday tasks. With regard to police training, adult education has been identified by both theorists and practitioners as valuable (Bayley and Bittner, 1984) and translates to bringing officers' experiences of the job in to the classroom, reflecting on them and learning from them. The participatory approach can be seen as an element of adult education, and was identified as an important part of training design in a College's review of 'what works' in police training (see Wheller and Morris, 2010). A participatory approach was also a key component of the College's previous procedural justice training pilot in Manchester (Wheller et al., 2013.) In the context of this study, it relates to the police officer playing an active role in the training process. This can be interpreted broadly, and as a result a variety of techniques can be classified as 'participatory'. The question that needs to be answered in identifying if an activity is participatory is 'was the officer taking an active role in his or her learning?'

One of the principles in the Guidance was that this training pilot should be provided in a participatory fashion. To determine whether this had occurred, training observers recorded whether content related to a learning objective was connected to a participatory activity. Such an activity could have included an exercise or interactive discussion. Most content relating to 'classroom training' learning objectives were indeed linked to a participatory activity. As noted above, the reasonable grounds objective was covered in all sessions observed, and in all cases included a participatory activity, and in 11 of 12 sessions this involved an exercise outlined in the trainers' guidance appendices, where officers attending the training are asked to assess grounds that have previously been assessed by a scrutiny panel.

Other classroom training learning objectives were addressed in participatory fashion as well – in 11 of 12 sessions, content surrounding the potential adverse impacts of stop and search was participatory, either through a directed exercise or general discussion; in ten of the 11 sessions where unconscious bias was discussed, this was participatory, normally through the images exercise outlined above; and all of the sessions (10) that included information on the steps to be taken before a search takes place included an exercise, usually involving an exercise with the GOWISELY acronym (though only three sessions used the specific GOWISELY exercise provided in the Guidance).

By contrast, the learning objectives set out as 'pre-read only' but nonetheless presented in-class tended to be more didactic in nature; for example, discussions of the history of stop and search were didactic in eight of 12 sessions; the situations where someone may be considered vulnerable was didactic in six of 11 sessions; and the conduct of section 60 searches was didactic in five of eight sessions. The only learning objective meant for in-class delivery that was consistently non-participatory in observations was the concept of conscious bias, which as noted above was often only tagged onto the end of the unconscious bias exercise in a brief slide.

A participatory approach was notable in all training sessions observed, and stated by trainers to be important both to officers attending the training and during interviews. The participatory approach was estimated by trainers to have encouraged engagement as well. In the survey, trainers indicated that a

majority of officers were 'very engaged' or 'fairly engaged' in all classroom training activities the survey asked about (though the survey list does not include all possible training activities).[50]

2.8 Certain participatory activities such as role-play were largely absent

While group discussion as part of the training was normally encouraged by the trainer and a number of exercises were regularly used, the use of role-play activities was largely absent. Role-play is one of the methods of experiential learning and was highlighted by the College in its initial literature review, which informed the pilot (see Wheller and Morris, 2010). In role-play exercises, participants act out a certain situation which is pre-defined and which includes pre-defined 'rules' defining their role, usually along with at least one other participant (Feinstein et al., 2002). Role-play can be considered either parallel to or a low-tech version of simulation exercises. Both rely on immersing the participant in a practical situation similar to that which they confront as part of their 'real-life' role. Both depend on meaningful feedback to the participant regarding their performance. While there is relatively little research on the effectiveness of role-play, there is strong evidence from systematic reviews and meta-analysis regarding the effectiveness of simulations for medical training: it significantly improves knowledge, skills and behaviours, and even patient outcomes (for example Cook et al., 2011). There is also some evidence of its usefulness in police use of force training (Helsen and Starkes, 1999). As role-play and simulation are not identical this evidence only points to the possible value of the first.

While role-play was not mandated as part of the course and trainers were encouraged to present the material as they felt appropriate, the absence of role-play was in contrast to the expectations of at least one of the training designers. This designer had imagined that the training course itself would be primarily scenario-based, using role-play exercises in a way that would enable trainers to help officers attending the training reflect on the core topics, among them unconscious bias.[51]

In practice, in most cases role-play was limited or absent, with role-play scenarios being used only to in the context of the role-play exercise outlined in Chapter 1, which focused on the GOWISELY aspects of stop and search. This was done in three of the 12 observed sessions. Where role-play was utilised, it seemed from observations to have been a quite scripted, rather perfunctory exercise that did not enable much reflection or improvement of interaction skills. There were variations in the sophistication of the exercises, from asking officers to just run through the steps with the partner without playing an actual role, to a more immersive exercise. It should be noted that without technological support (creating a virtual environment) meaningful role-play and simulations are difficult to facilitate. Use of professional actors or volunteers from community groups was also suggested by one of the designers to aid trainers.[52]

An overview of the participatory elements of all exercises reveals that while the full range of techniques to encourage active learning was not accessed, with little or no problem-based learning strategies, peer-

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[50] In response to question 19: 'In general, how engaged or disengaged do you think officers were in each of the following elements of the classroom training?'

[51] Designer interview 5.

[52] Designer interview 5.

learning and role-play.[53] There were some interesting discussions led by trainers that encouraged officers attending the training' to reflect on their own practices.[54] However, this approach relies strongly on the individual skills of the trainer and their interaction with the group. Conversely, using structured exercises allows delivery by a diverse group of trainers but ensures greater consistency of approach.

Some examples of seemingly effective use of participatory and adult education techniques observed in session demonstrate this. Across the majority of sessions, trainers skilfully connected the training to officers' everyday reality and allowed them to discuss their own experiences. One force handed out copies of Code A and referred to them throughout the training, asking officers attending the training to refer to the handout to find out answers for themselves whenever there was an issue they were unsure about[55]; this technique drew on the problem solving approach and encouraged active learning. In three observations, trainers asked officers attending the training to describe a stop and search they had recently carried out, and asked them to reflect on the results: "What outcome [i.e. 'hit rate'] would you be happy with there? 5%? 10%? 20%?"[56] They then used those examples throughout the day to demonstrate certain points or ask officers attending the training to reflect on them further: "Let's go back to your shoplifter example".[57]

2.9 Pre-reading materials were rarely (if ever) referenced in training sessions

During the classroom sessions, trainers and officers attending the training tended not to refer to the pre-reading materials that were sent as part of the course preparation. In only one of the observed training sessions did a participant make reference to the pre-reading content, and this was not in response to a trainer's prompting. This raises the question about what role the reading materials are meant to play within training delivery. It is worth recognising that in its initial conceptualisation, it was reported by interviewees that the pilot training was meant to have an e-learning component, but that this could not be finalised in time for the start of the pilot, so a pre-read and assessment were used in place of e-learning.[58]

The lack of active use of the materials in sessions suggests that trainers either did not have adequate tools to bring the pre-read materials into the class session or did not see it as valuable. Adult education theory and occupational training research (for example Cook et al., 2010) suggests that for the officers attending the training to have in-depth access to the ideas or information included in these reading a more active approach is necessary either within the classroom (reading together in small groups, discussing and debriefing each element etc.) or outside the classroom in the form of a more interactive e-learning module.

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[53] Most evidence on the effectiveness of these activities emphasises them as promising (for example, Wheller and Morris, 2010; Bennel et al., 2007; and Gijbels et al., 2005).

[54] For example observation num. 9

[55] Training observations 8 and 9.

[56] Training observation 7.

[57] Training observation 9.

[58] Designer interviews 3 and 5.

Moreover, it is not known how many officers had completed the pre-reading based on observations and interviews with trainers, even where assessments were then completed. In the survey, only one of 22 trainers estimated that all officers had done the pre-reading,[59] though 14 of 22 estimated that all officers had completed the knowledge check.[60] The value of the pre-read to the officers is considered again in Chapter 3, where implementation issues around the pre-read are discussed, and in Chapter 5, where interviewees similarly suggest that they did not engage with the pre-read materials.

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[59] In response to question 10: 'In your view, roughly what proportion of officers completed the pre-read?' Ten of 22 estimated that 'most' had done the pre-read, and 11 estimated that 'some' (8) or 'a few' (3) had done it.

[60] In response to question 12: 'In your view, roughly what proportion of officers completed the knowledge check?'

3 What were the main implementation issues?

This chapter answers the second half of research question 1: What were the main implementation issues? It focuses on data from the training observation sessions, interviews with force leads and trainers, the online survey of the trainers, and interviews with national stakeholders in the design process.

3.1 The use of guidance rather than a manual underpins many of the implementation concerns identified in observations and interviews.

Trainers and force project leads expressed their concern and initial surprise that they were not being given a manual – in the sense of clear steps and statements required to be delivered in each training session – but rather were expected to take away guidance and then design their own course. Twelve (of 14) trainer survey respondents also stated that they had expected the College to create training products that could then be delivered locally. In interviews, most trainers indicated that they were expecting to receive a training manual, and when this was not 'delivered', experienced disappointment. As one force trainer stated:

> You feel like you've worked on your own on this one. With no support really. I don't feel that the College of Policing designed any training for this. They issued some material, but they issue material on all sorts of things. (Trainer interview 18)

Another, in response to a trainer survey free-text question,[61] stated:

> The training materials provided by the College were of a very poor standard. The resources were in my opinion unfit for purpose. Could a trainer have picked up those materials and delivered an effective training session? In my opinion the answer to that question is NO.

A number of designer and trainer interviews reflect a broader lack of satisfaction with regards to the College's preparation of the force trainers:

> But one of the current outstanding failures for me in this is that the quality of the package isn't good enough yet to be handed over, there is no train the trainer's package with it... And whilst they [force trainers] have got guidance, I think they need training, they need a train the trainer's package... And half a day, or a day's train the trainer's package I don't think has been sufficient to make sure we have got quality across the police. (Designer interview 4)

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[61] Answering the question, "Did the training that was delivered locally differ from the 'Guidance for Trainers'?"

Well, 50/50 [useful] I suppose. There was some information that was obviously very useful… [but] we went there thinking there was a package to be shown how to deliver. (Trainer interview 19)

A guidance-based approach left the training open to interpretations which created a gap between messages intended by national developers and stakeholders and those delivered on the ground, and a gap between forces in terms of training implementation. Further, considering the highly politicised and complex topic of the training and the intention to deliver national training with complex key messages, the product communicated to the forces lacked the practical support and advice that would enable them to include such approaches or activities in a substantial way, according to stakeholder interviews.

While flexible implementation at the force level was part of the intended pilot approach, the lack of specific direction was seen as problematic at the force level because trainers thought they would be given clearer instructions on the training, both in terms of content and structure, and because the force-level design of the training was to take place over the summer months when many of the key individuals that would support the design were to be on leave. It was reported that the College became aware of this concern and indeed responded to it by the time of the second 'train-the-trainers' event by providing more comprehensive guidance as well as a number of specific exercises.

Despite steps taken by the College to provide guidance, delivery at each force differed substantially. These differences were more substantial than simply tailoring training messages or content with force-specific examples. Rather, as is outlined above, the purpose of the training as understood by officers attending the training – and the problem to which they thought the training is a response – differed in important ways between forces and stakeholders.

3.2 The 'train-the-trainers' events did not match expectations with content

Based on the interviews, while opinions on the value of the session were mixed,[62] the 'train-the-trainers' events were not satisfactory in the eyes of several force project leads and trainers. Again, the major concern amongst those dissatisfied related to the fact that a manual was not provided, which was reported by trainers to have been a surprise. Many trainers appear to have arrived at the events with the expectation that they would be guided through the main training steps and exercises, and reported that the difference between expectations and actual content was off-putting.

Considering once again the complexity of the topic, and especially considering there was no manual to follow, the 'train-the-trainer' sessions were seen as not providing adequate information to participants and often leaving them confused as to how to deliver the training. Indeed, of those 11 trainers who were interviewed and attended the 'train-the-trainer' sessions, seven expressed reservations about their experience, while the others offered no strong opinion. Based on the limited skills development at the

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[62] This claim is also supported by the trainers' survey, where half (5 of 10) of valid respondents rated the event 'fair' or worse, while five rated it 'good' or 'excellent'.

sessions, trainers suggested that they relied mostly on their pre-existing knowledge and skills; this is not to suggest the trainers did not perform well, simply that the event did not provide further tools.

The Guidance for Trainers included reference to core documents that may have served as additional preparation materials, but since these were rarely mentioned, it is possible trainers did not read them or study them in a way that they could then draw on them. Alongside trainers' reservations with the sessions, there was a view among two national stakeholders that more effort needs to be invested in training trainers as well.

3.3 The 'fair and effective' definition has created challenges for trainers and officers attending training

Two consistent concerns were raised across contexts regarding the definition of 'fair and effective' search, and these warrant consideration in terms of securing buy-in from officers attending the training. These were:

- **The use of 'genuine belief'**: In multiple forces, trainers were seen to be challenged by trainees about the meaning and value of the phrase 'genuine belief'. The tone of these challenges ranged from those seeking clarification to those expressing strong scepticism with the definition. The reasons for this challenge centred on whether 'genuine belief' was a matter of 'best practice' that in effect made the threshold for a stop and search higher than that for an arrest. If this was the case, trainees then sought clarity as to why best practice would be a higher threshold than legislation, which in their view already appeared to be adequately constraining of the power.
- **The use of 'more often than not'**: Again, in multiple observations in different forces, training participants expressed that there were many instances where negative searches (i.e. those where no item was found) had an otherwise successful outcome. An illustrative example expressed in training sessions in at least two forces was where an officer received compelling information that there were three young men who had been seen passing a weapon between one another. If the officer did not know which of the three had the weapon, but reasonably suspected (or even believed) that at least one of them had a weapon, they previously would not hesitate to search all three. If they then found the knife, they would consider this a success, but the 'fair and effective' definition would reflect more negatively on the encounter, since it would produce a one-in-three hit rate.

The section referring to 'belief' was the main source of contention for project leads, trainers and among officers attending the training. The aspect of 'belief' within the new definition was strongly opposed by many because it was deemed unfeasible, and because trainers and officers attending the training thought it was incompatible with the law. This caused added antagonism because it was viewed as simply another fad that would pass, unless reflected in the law. Quotes on belief from two of the forces demonstrate this point:

> [T]hen suddenly the legislation hasn't changed and yet we are telling them to do something different so that to me was always an underlying problem and it affects people's attitudes and I can remember someone saying well what are you going to tell us to do next week, it is going to be even more different. (Trainer interview 8)

> I think we knew that it would be an issue with the officers, we understood the point of it, however... some of these things that come out from the College of Policing get announced and then we never hear about them ever again. The 'fair and effective' [definition], it is almost like the College of Policing are asking us to do a fair and effective search, however, it is not backed up by legislation, it's the College of Policing interpretation of the law. Whereas the officers also have their own interpretation of the law. (Trainer interview 18)

Only two interviewees, a trainer and a force lead (not from the same force), thought the change was relevant and could be useful in helping to improve practice:

> [W]hat I wanted to do was bring across that actually although you have that suspicion now could you explain that suspicion to this objective third person who is supposed to be a reasonable person, could you make that third person have the same suspicion that you've got and that is a genuine suspicion and it was labouring that point I think but I think it has made this training successful for us but obviously the proof of the pudding will be in the eating and how many stop-searches we do and what our hit rate is. (Trainer interview 4)

> I mean obviously there's a movement away from you know the reasonable suspicion and reasonable belief scenario that you're looking at and I think the goal to move to a higher standard of reasonable, you know, of suspicion, for conducting your searches, was fair. I think it's quite clear it conflicts with normal practice I think, but that's why you're doing the training isn't it? (Trainer interview 9)

It is worth noting that the national training designers and stakeholders said they were aware of the challenges that would likely arise from the use of this definition because similar concerns had arisen from an earlier consultation process. Most appeared to treat it is as a 'working' definition rather than a finished product. As one designer (Designer interview 1) indicated, the pilot provided an opportunity to test both the definition and the training.[63]

3.4 The smell of cannabis 'rule' generated substantial discussion and challenge by officers attending the training

In each of the 12 observed training sessions, the trainers dedicated time to discussing the new guidance to officers that the smell of cannabis, on its own, was not sufficient grounds to conduct a search. The basis for this guidance is not clear, and the guidance was only briefly included in the Guidance for Trainers within an appendix exercise, yet featured in all training sessions. In interviews and discussions during training, it was suggested by two separate forces that the guidance originated with them, and in another force it was suggested that this was a determination made by a scrutiny panel rather than a originating with a specific force. The lack of clarity surrounding the genesis of the guidance may have contributed to

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[63] From a piloting standpoint, this raises potential issues regarding replication of the intervention in national roll-out, since multiple aspects of the intervention and underpinning guidance (such as the 'fair and effective' definition) will have been changed following the pilot. As is discussed again in the implications section, this suggests the revised training should be evaluated as any effects observed from the pilot may not be replicated with the new product.

the extensive discussion, but even if the basis was better known, it is clear (also from officer interviews in the next chapter) that this guidance was controversial.

The main objections to this 'rule' were based on the view that it violated common sense – that the smell of cannabis was clearly evidence that something against the law had happened in the vicinity, and especially if this smell was coming from a vehicle, which also suggested possible intoxication while driving. Both observations and interviews with trainers show that trainers did not always have strong responses ready to this kind of challenge. As one interviewee noted:

> Yeah the reasonable grounds exercise was challenging because you have such a sliding scale of officers what they would consider, you know, a good bang on stop and search and what wouldn't be and it was things like, for instance, the one that threw up the massive amount of debate was the grounds around cannabis, you know, is smelling cannabis on someone, having a little bit of glazed eyes, is that enough to search them and what else can we do to solidify the grounds a bit more and that threw up a lot of debate and took up a lot of time so the searches around drugs and sort of personal use cannabis, that was a challenge. (Trainer interview 2)

However, other trainers found ways to use the rule as a means to highlight wider issues around how and when searches are conducted in light of force priorities. For example, this allowed discussion of the balance between the actual potential benefits of a cannabis search (or other search related to a low-level offence) against the possible adverse impacts of searches, whether positive or negative:

> We tried to say, "Look the law's the law, but let's look at this as best practice" particularly when you're applying it to those sort of low level scenarios where you might be looking for a bit of personal use cannabis which is a particular problem of ours… But maybe when you've got five kids [in public and]… there's a bit of a whiff of cannabis in there, you might think maybe I'll stick more closely to the 'fair and effective' definition …." And when you explain about that balance, most people go "Yeah okay I get it". (Trainer interview 1)

In this sense, trainers were able, in some circumstances, to use the smell of cannabis 'rule' as way to illustrate some of the broader considerations relating to the decision to search. Therefore, manner of engagement and receptiveness which officers attending the training demonstrated in relation to this 'rule' hinged on how trainers framed it and how they brought it into the wider debate.

3.5 The purpose and impact of the pre-reading remain unclear

Pre-reads were chosen by training designers as a replacement to an e-learning module, as there was not enough time to prepare one. As outlined in the Guidance for Trainers, pre-reading materials were meant to support 12 of the 14 learning objectives, presumably by enhancing core knowledge in these areas among officers prior to attending. Pre-reads were planned to be sent out in all forces, but it is tough to judge how far in advance they were seen by officers attending the training, as there were issues with advance communication discussed further in Chapter 4 and 5. While some supervisors may have set aside time for reading, this was not the policy for any of the forces. At the same time, most force leads and trainers did not think the majority of officers would/could make the time to read through such a document without the time being specifically allocated to it. In line with this, over a third of officers

(37%) who completed the feedback sheets at the end of the training reported that they had not completely read the pre-read material. Some leads and trainers thought it should have been presented differently to encourage reading. For example, some suggested that visual elements would need to be changed to make it more accessible. One force added on videos from earlier training packages to raise chances that the officers would look through the material.

These quotes demonstrate the trainers' concerns over the take-up of the pre-reading materials by the officers attending the training:

> Some people say that they didn't get [the pre-reading materials] but we kind of think they did and… I know [that] Officers on response shifts are busy in certain areas – are really busy – I mean they literally come in in the morning, they have their briefing with their sergeant and then that's it and their head goes down and they are just going from job to job to job to job, and if they get an email that says you've got this pre-read, they will look at it and go, 'well, I'll do that later,' and later never comes and so they get to the training and they haven't done it so. I'm not convinced unless we can write in to the training that they have duty time in order to carry out the pre-read, they're not going to do the pre-read…. I don't really agree with the pre-read unless we can give them duty time. (Trainer interview 4)

> I think the pre-reads are very useful but they need to be part and parcel of the culture of the organisation and the organisation needs to appreciate that people need time to do it. The problem is if there isn't a culture, and people don't have the time, then it doesn't always happen, and as I say that's why we covered all learning outcomes, because we were conscious of the fact that some people would not have had the opportunity to do it. (Trainer interview 8)

As noted above, the pre-read was also rarely referenced and never in any depth in the training sessions that were observed. As discussed further in Chapter 5, the pre-read did not seem to have been of much interest to officers as few could recall the content of the material.

As the pre-read material was an expedient replacement for an e-learning module during the pilot, the above concerns may be less relevant during the national roll-out if e-learning is implemented as part of the training package instead. Of course, issues regarding the usefulness and embeddedness within classroom activities of the e-learning module will still need to be monitored in the next iteration of the training.

3.6 Further considerations on elements of difference in forces' approaches to training delivery

A number of training approaches observed by the research team and subsequently discussed with trainers appeared to be well-received or have the potential to effect behaviour change.[64] There were many

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[64] Until the wider impact evaluation and patrol observations have been completed, we remain neutral as to whether we are able to conclude that the training has had an impact on officer behaviour. In suggesting that something was promising, we are identifying training approaches that were observed to be *received well by officers attending the training*, *suggested to be effective by trainers*, and/or be *in line with what is known to be effective in the wider adult education literature.*

differences between the ways in which different forces delivered their training, and some of these differences amount to implementation issues as outlined above. Below are outlined four specific areas that are worth reflecting upon in terms of the different strategies used by each force, and where the strategy observed seemed to be effective, or otherwise. While it is not possible to assess the impact these specific elements of the training, the findings below may offer some indication as to what might be effective in the national roll-out.

3.6.1 Use of assessment in classroom training

Two of the forces asked the officers to complete the assessment in-class at the outset of the training session or immediately after the introduction, normally taking approximately 20 minutes. After the assessment was completed, the trainer introduced questions from the assessment into relevant components of the training. While this approach was not intended by the training designers, it generated focused discussion on key learning outcomes, primarily but not exclusively, around reasonable grounds and proper procedure.

Other forces used similar strategies in providing reference materials (such as a learning self-assessment or copy of PACE Code A) at the start of class and then referring back to them throughout the session. This is a strategy that wider evidence suggests supports more 'active learning, for example when used as part of problem-based learning (Albanese, 2000).'

3.6.2 The use of videos such as 'Y-Stop' and 'Mr Policeman'

Videos such as 'Y-Stop' and the YouTube clip 'Mr Policeman' were included in the training to generate discussion around good and bad practice in stop and search encounters. Trainers appeared to believe that videos did serve a purpose, as 14 of 20 trainers reported that they felt that officers attending the training were either 'very' or 'fairly engaged' with the Y-Stop video. Nonetheless, the videos appeared to have the effect of making some officers uncomfortable and in certain cases generated dismissive attitudes by those who saw them as non-representative of the vast majority of police behaviour, and others thought in the case of Y-Stop that it was poorly acted. These issues were identified both in observations and subsequently in interviews with trainers. How the trainer introduces and debriefs the video appears to be particularly important as to whether the use of particular audio-visual material serve to increase cynicism amongst officers attending the training. One implication of this finding is that if videos are to be used then more comprehensive guidance on framing and debriefing video content could usefully be included in the guidance or manual, and also in the 'train-the-trainers' sessions. However, this should not rule out the use of videos in future training that reflect poorer or problematic police behaviour, and we also observed sessions where these videos generated reflective discussions amongst officers attending the training. It should also be noted that, in the officer interviews reported in the Chapter 5, officers appeared to have a less favourable assessment of what the videos were depicting than the trainers.

3.6.3 Icebreaker strategies

Icebreakers are commonly used at the start of training programmes to encourage training attendees to learn about each other through active participation, to encourage the exchanges of ideas, and to set the

tone for the session. In this training, an 'if you have been stopped X times sit down' exercise was developed, but was not often reported in the observations; according to the survey 12 of 21 trainers did not use it. This was referred to specifically by a training lead who said it was not appropriate for their force in which officers are mostly white so it would not demonstrate what the training lead saw as 'the point', which was to demonstrate race disproportionality in searching.[65] However, in one force, the icebreaker used was simply a 'round-robin' in which officers attending the training were asked to state how regularly they use the power and describe their last time (when and what), which differed substantially from the approach outlined in the Guidance. This had the aim of simply pointing out the relevance of the training and developing a sense of comradery in the room.

3.6.4 Perceived trainer credibility

The perceived credibility of the trainer was an issue both for the trainers, who made efforts to signal their own credibility on the subject matter throughout the training, and for the officers attending the training, who responded to these signals by asking trainers to share their experiences and for advice. Trainers chose to emphasise their length of service in the police, the roles they had served in, their own expertise in stop and search, and their connections to significant historical events (for example being an officer during the Brixton riots). In several forces, the trainers were members of police staff – and even though some were former officers – their role might have had impact on their credibility in the eyes of officers attending the training. Some quotes from trainer interviews from two of the forces also reinforce this:

> I felt that there needed a degree of credibility, I think XXX Police had already thought that by because they had said that the training would be rolled out by police officers as opposed to civilian trainers, because if we telling police officers that perhaps they haven't been getting things right and we need to change the way that we think about something then it needs to come from a credible level and I felt that being a practitioner I was a good person to be able to do that. (Trainer interview 4)

> We wanted to get police officers who are out doing operational work, but still training to come in to give it some depth, and then people would sit there and go, okay this is something to be listened to. (Trainer interview 18)

In one force, a superintendent introduced the training, and their involvement was thought by the trainers to have worked well to heighten engagement and buy-in of officers attending the training.

This is a theme that is explored further in Chapter 5, where officer perceptions of the importance of trainer experience are shown to be similar to the opinions expressed by trainers.

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[65] Trainer interview 18; it is worth noting that the exercise can also be used to demonstrate the potential impacts of being searched regardless of race.

4 To what extent did peers, supervisors, middle managers and senior leaders act as a facilitator or barrier to change?

This chapter answers research question 3: To what extent did peers, supervisors, middle managers and senior leaders act as a facilitator or barrier to change associated with the improved stop and search behaviours? It utilises data from the training observation sessions, interviews with force leads and trainers, and interviews with officers (including field interviews with officers during patrol observation shifts).

4.1 Advance communication of training to attendees differed in important ways between forces

As was indicated at a number of points in Chapters 2 and 3, there were many areas where messages surrounding the training were not communicated clearly or consistently between different organisations or individuals involved in the pilot. At the force level, supervisors and more senior officers played a role in communications surrounding the training pilot and stop and search practice more generally. In relation to the training pilot, advance communication to officers by the forces created a number of issues, both in terms of how they were told that they would be undertaking additional training and when they were told.

The literature recognises that a key factor to success is the 'acceptability of intervention', which in this case would refer to participants received the training (see e.g. Craig et al., 2008). Acceptability appeared to be was shaped prominently by how the training was framed by supervisors. Based on observations and interviews, in one force in particular (but to a lesser extent also in others) the officers attending the training received partial or wrong information (either jokingly or not) that the training was a 'punishment' for 'problem officers', who were 'in trouble' for their stop and search practices. A small minority of officers who were observed attending the training, therefore, showed up angry, worried or antagonistic. In some areas, they refused to attend the training.[66] As is further discussed in Chapter 5, a number of officers reported advance communications problems including the notion that they had been actively (rather than randomly) selected, and others expressed scepticism at the randomness of the selection process. To limit these misperceptions, most observed trainers began sessions by reassuring officers attending the training during the start of training sessions that the officers were 'ok' and that the research was not 'against them' (one officer reportedly cried with relief when this was explained). These kinds of discussions surrounding the training may have harmed the extent to which trainers could

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[66] Trainer interviews 16, 17, and 18; training observations 7 and 8.

successfully deliver one of the core messages of the training: that there is a problem that needs to be addressed.

Communication was particularly an issue for one of the forces, where it reportedly created enough antagonism among officers attending the training that the training messages had to be altered to limit defensiveness among participants:

> I would look at how we communicated the pilot to students in the first place, so that we didn't have that attitude issue at the beginning of the training... the blurb that came out from the College of Policing already put barriers up to the training. It was about us having to remove those barriers to actually get to the point of the training, which was to look at the 'fair and effective' search [definition]. (Trainer interview 18)

Another trainer said that:

> We had some officers who were convinced that they'd been sent on this training because their supervisors had an issue with them with stop-search… You know, there was at least one person throughout every session who would just say, "No it's because my supervisor's got an issue with me, with my stop-search record and whatever and this is a punishment training." (Trainer interview 17)

Additionally, some officers were not made aware of their selection to the training until as late as the day before they were meant to attend; this was reportedly due to a communication breakdown at the force level, a lack of clarity between the force and the College, or because of annual leave complications (e.g. an officer being away during the announcement of the training).

The main difference in how the course was framed was the degree to which trainers acknowledged that stop and search was an in-force problem. That is, that their specific force had shortcomings or whether the source of the problem was 'elsewhere' (e.g. with other forces thought to be 'worse' in their conduct of stop and search, or that it was a political problem 'invented' by social science or politicians. While some trainers admitted force-level issues, virtually all trainers reassured the specific participants during the training session that they were not specifically singled out as 'problem users'.

4.2 There was a recognised knowledge gap amongst direct supervisors and senior officers regarding the training content

In at least two forces, it was explicitly recognised during the training sessions that the approach to stop and search being trained in the pilot was different to previous training and may not be well-understood by officers' supervisors. As one trainer noted during interviews, senior officers may not be fully aware of the nature of the power due to past practice:

> I think some of the people who are coming through now are obviously getting different training because their understanding was better than actually the older officers and people were still calling it and unfortunately we've still got senior officers calling it stop and search a tactic and it is not a tactic it is a power. (Trainer interview 4)

As is explored further in Chapter 5, the distinction between stop and search as a 'power' (similar to an arrest, something that has to be specifically warranted by legal grounds) rather than a 'tactic' (i.e. something that can be used in many situations to achieve a policing end, such as foot patrol) was a distinction that was seen as differentiating past practice from the training's content, although this distinction was not explicitly set out in the Guidance for Trainers.

The knowledge gap among senior officers and supervisors was in part necessitated by the nature of the pilot, which involved individual officers being randomised to the treatment or control rather than officers in teams (e.g. all officers under a specific supervisor), where it may have been more practicable to train specific supervisors to bring them up to speed with the training content.

The implications of this knowledge gap are unclear. On the one hand, as discussed below, officers were generally concerned about their place within a performance culture, and during training sessions officers were observed recalling instances where their personal stop and search performance was challenged or criticised. However, as discussed in the next chapter, it also appeared that officers rarely got any feedback or input from supervisors on their stop and search practice, so the personal implications for officers from any knowledge gap may be limited in scope. Nonetheless, where supervisors were unaware (or unsupportive) of new guidance, they have in turn given poor, conflicting, or no direction to their officers, thus limiting the ability of any attempts to improve practice to take root.

As a pilot, the organisational knowledge about the training content would understandably be low as the training is taking place in advance of wider force roll-out. Additionally, given the pilot timeline and other noted communication issues, one force trainer indicated an inability to more widely communicate the pilot's purposes to middle managers and senior officers.[67] During national roll-out, specific additional training will be provided to supervisors and senior leaders, so officers may be able assume that their supervisors will be apprised of any changes in approach relating to the training.

4.3 Organisational barriers and potential levers were also identified during training implementation

Performance culture: officers and trainers[68] discussed the negative impact of 'training meeting reality' in cases where the 'performance culture' – a supervisory focus on for example targets for volume activities (including numbers of stops and searches), numbers of arrests, and so on – was still very much present. They pragmatically thought that trying to 'do things differently' would not be accepted or appreciated by others in the organisation (for example by their supervisors), and were worried that it would cause them to 'fail' in the eyes of their peers.

Holistic approach to improving stop and search within the organisation: The involvement in the training of the force lead on stop and search seemed to be important in maximizing the relevance of the training to the specific force (for example by including accurate figures on race disproportionality or

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[67] Trainer interview 10.

[68] Training observations 7 and 8, trainer interview 8

describing what strategies other than the training are being used). While this could be compensated for by involved and caring trainers, observations and interviews suggested that a force lead who knew the exact issues the organisation is dealing with, and utilised training alongside other tools (for example public scrutiny panels) to promote fairer and more effective use of the power has the potential to provide a more holistic strategy to tackling the issues.

Procedural issues and technology: Some forces were using mobile devices or other technology to record searches, which could be an efficient recording method, but needed to be aligned with the training and legislation. For example, if there were parts of procedure (giving your name and address) that were required by the app, but not in law, it contradicted the training messages. In other forces it seemed the mobile devices could not produce a 'receipt number', which prevented members of the public being able to access their search record (a legal requirement). It should also be noted that if the mobile devices took a long time to 'work', it could hamper the public cooperation and create discontent towards the police. While all these should be viewed as 'growing pains' of innovation, they should be monitored closely to ensure they are only temporary. As the literature demonstrates, training that is not aligned to organisational procedures has little chance of succeeding (see, for example, Garavan 2007).

4.4 Support of training by supervisors/senior officers appeared to encourage officers

The interviews with trainers reflected a variety of opinions about how the training was developed and delivered across organisations. Collaborative processes in which a group of trainers were involved in creating the training package, involving practitioners in the training team and hot debriefs during the phase of delivery all seem to be possible routes to ensuring high fidelity in delivery, with the training product achieving the purpose force leads set out.

Involving senior management in the training communication plan was singled out as valuable in two of the forces, where senior management were involved in delivering the training, either the entire session or its introduction, and this seems to have caused officers attending the training to value the training and 'believe' the organisation was serious about the suggested changes:

> The ACC [Assistant Chief Constable] comes along as a sound chap and he speaks their language and it gets them on board and explains what he is trying to do to make their job easier so he's giving out a very positive message that perhaps they haven't had sufficiently often so to me it was a very positive thing to having him do that. (Trainer interview 8)

This approach was supported explicitly by one of the national designers:

> Investing all these resources for me is about enhancing your chance of success, so I think engagement of leadership should have been an element of it. (Designer interview 4)

This position was also reinforced as a positive approach during the synthesis workshop.

Conversely, as noted in Chapter 2, in one force an inspector regularly attended training sessions and led introductory and debriefing sessions where the inspector voiced their own (often sceptical) opinions about the stop and search training, and this appeared to have an impact on participants' experience of the

training. This suggests that more negative messages from middle and senior management may play a role in the acceptance of the core messages of the training.

4.5 Officers did not report substantial influences from their supervisors or peers

Officers' reports of the directions that they received from their supervisors were mixed. Eight officers reported that they felt that they received no support from senior management with respect to searches, which impacted upon their willingness to conduct them.[69] Seven officers stated that they received no guidance from their managers on their use of stop and search.[70] For example, one officer remarked: "I could go a month and not do one, and no one would ever say anything." (Officer interview 16) Three commented that their supervisors were never present during the searches that they conducted, and were therefore limited in their awareness of practice and in their capacity to give feedback.[71] Four interviewees reported that their supervisors were not aware of changes to the policy on stop and search.[72] Another three interviewees stated that guidance from their superiors was limited to checking their paperwork.[73] Five officers reported that they had been asked to provide more grounds for their searches,[74] while five said they had received messages instructing a reduction in drug searches.[75] Only one officer reported the performance indicators for searches currently existed[76], although many stated that they had previously been in place. Another officer expressed the view that many of his colleagues were afraid of complaints from members of the public on their searches, and the potential consequences for their career, suggesting a lack of confidence in supervisory support.[77]

Only four officers spoke of the influence of their fellow officers on their attitudes towards and practice of stop and search.[78] Of these, two officers spoke generally about constructive discussions with their peers on conducting searches and listening to different points of view on it.

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[69] Officer interviews 18 and 19; and field observations 2, 11, 12, 13, 20 and 21.

[70] Officer interviews 11, 12, 21, 23, 26 and 29; and field observation 14.

[71] Officer interviews 12, 18 and 23.

[72] Officer interviews 12, 14, 26 and 27.

[73] Officer interviews 10, 18 and 25.

[74] Officer interviews 17 and 19; and field observations 22 and 30.

[75] Officer interviews 10, 16 and 19; and field observations 20 and 27.

[76] Field observation 20.

[77] Officer interview 18.

[78] Officer interviews 10, 17, 18 and 25.

4.6 Officers reported an awareness of the current political context of stop and search

While not specifically related to other officers acting as barriers or facilitators to changes in practice, it is worth noting that 12 officers spoke quite passionately about the impact of statements from the Home Secretary in relation to stop and search powers on officer morale and practice.[79]

> … the Home Secretary has certainly been involved in stoking the fire on that one about stop and search, unacceptable levels of stop and search in communities, in certain areas of London and things like that. I think a lot of police officers feel really personally offended because they are like, "Well all I'm trying to do is stop kids from killing each other over stupid things," and I think that's why it raised a lot of questions. (Officer interview 25)

Three of the 12 officers interpreted these statements to mean that the Home Secretary wanted fewer searches being conducted,[80] while two complained that her comments on the number of people from ethnic minority groups being searched were unfair.[81] Another two interviewees reported generally that the Home Secretary did not support police use of stop and search powers, and that this had a knock on effect in terms of officers' willingness to conduct searches,[82] and another officer reported a negative attitude towards conducting searches amongst his colleagues, saying that they felt 'under attack' from the media and the Home Secretary.[83] One interviewee stated that "officers, because they don't see them up standing for us, aren't searching people anymore."[84]

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[79] Officer interviews 13, 17, 18, 21, 25, 26 and 29; and field observations 5, 7, 13, 16 and 22.

[80] Officer interviews 21, 25 and 26.

[81] Officer interviews 13 and 17.

[82] Officer interviews 19 and 29.

[83] Officer interview 25.

[84] Officer interview 13.

5 How was the training course perceived by officers, and how did it reportedly influence their stop and search practices?

The chapter addresses research question 4: How was the training course perceived by officers, and how did it reportedly influence their stop and search practices? It draws on data from interviews (59 in total, including both planned interviews and field interviews) with officers who had received the training, as well as feedback sheets completed by officers at the conclusion of each training session.

5.1 How was the training course perceived by officers?

Overall, many officers interviewed expressed positive opinions in interviews about the training they received, the quality of the trainers and the level of participation they were able to have in the training. A generally positive attitude toward the training was also reflected in feedback sheets, with 83% of respondents rating the course as 'good' or 'excellent' overall, and 75% of respondents indicated that the training was 'a lot better' or 'a little better' than previous training they had received on stop and search. Nonetheless, a number of themes arising in interviews identified points of concern in terms of officers' understandings of the purpose of the training or specific pieces of training content.

Understanding of the purpose behind the training was split amongst officers. Six officers thought that the training was the result of recent statements from the Home Secretary in relation to stop and search powers, with one officer reporting that one of the trainers showed officers attending the training a statement from the Home Secretary and attributing it as the catalyst for the training.[85] Another recalled that the course was presented by the trainers as:

> …a response to the Home Office saying that there was basically too many stop-searches going on and too many disproportionate searches going on in respect of ethnic groups being stopped. Disproportionate amount of white people being stopped, they having to introduce this sort of stop-search programme and as a result we were going to be, I don't know, it was going to be tried and tested. (Officer interview 28)

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[85] Officer interviews 5, 25, 27 and 28; and field observations 4 and 27.

Five interviewees reported that the training was intended to advise attendees on a change of policy in relation to conducting stop and searches;[86] in the words of one officer, "to highlight [that]…the stop-search legislation did not change but the way you do stop-search has changed.[87] A similar number stated that the training was designed to inform them about the correct way to conduct a search.[88]Three interviewees stated that the purpose of the training was to make police officers do fewer searches.[89] Two thought that the training came about due to recent media coverage on the use of stop and search,[90] with one officer stating that:

> [I]t's been in the media a lot recently, about whether or not the police need restricted powers for stop and search, because of abuse of power, but at the same time in the media as well, the public have become more receptive of the police because of the rise in knife crime in London. (Officer interview 21)

One interviewee stated that the training was intended to increase the success rate of searches,[91] and another thought it was held because stop and search powers were under review.[92] Two officers remained unclear about the purpose of the training.[93]

More than a dozen officers described the training as a helpful 'refresher', particularly in relation to the legislation underpinning the powers and procedure for conducting stop and search (e.g. GOWISELY). [94] Within this group, a high proportion reported that they had not learnt anything new at the training.[95]

However, officer interviewee 9 believed that it was "less of a refresher, and more of just a let's teach you from scratch", which was interpreted by the officer as "condescending". Officer interviewee 17 similarly described the training as "basic" and expressed that it was superficial in that "it didn't really attack an issue [the use of stop and search] that should be looked at".

Three interviewees felt that the training had been informative in helping them to see stop and search from another perspective.[96] One interviewee explained:

> …it was good to actually see it from the videos just the norm of the public or anyone would see and people in schools would see and you would think actually that's the view that a lot of young

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[86] Officer interviews 6, 14, 15, 23 and 30.

[87] Officer interview 15.

[88] Officer interviews 22, 25, 26 and 29.

[89] Officer interviews 9, 17 and 26.

[90] Officer interviews 7 and 21.

[91] Officer interview 26.

[92] Officer interview 20; and field observation 20.

[93] Officer interview 4.

[94] Officer interviews 2, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14, 16, 20, 22, 24, 25, 26 and 27.

[95] Officer interviews 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 16, 17, 20, 25 and 26.

[96] Officer interviews 14, 26 and 27.

people are getting as opposed to the youngsters that we are just dealing with. (Officer interview 27)

Interviewee 14 felt that the training focused on the impact of stop and searches on ethnic minorities, something which he did not feel was particularly relevant to his experiences of policing in a predominantly white neighbourhood. However, he explained that the training had made him more conscious of the need to explain to members of the public why they were being searched, since "you want to make sure you don't upset those people who will take offence at being stop-searched". Another officer expressed surprise to find out that his force had one of the highest rates of race disproportionality in stop and searches in the country, and described this as an "eye-opener".[97]

Three interviewees described the training as necessary.[98] For example, one indicated that the training was necessary because it was important to restore confidence amongst officers using the power, which was perceived to have been eroded in the light of negative rhetoric around the power in the media.[99] Another referred to the political and legislative climate in relation to the use of stop and search:

> Yes it was necessary, but particularly if the legislation is going to change or the way we use legislation is going to change for whatever reason definitely. More people should be aware of it and, even if the training we received that said this, was put into one of these NCALT [e-learning] packages, showing everybody how to do it, everybody had to realise using those same examples that we discussed to learn that there's an expected way of doing it, is different now and the reasons why are because if we keep doing it the way we're doing it, just stop-searches carte blanche, it's going to be taken away from us or massively restricted. (Officer interview 14)

5.1.1 Officers tended to focus on the definition of a 'fair and effective' search, establishing reasonable grounds and conscious and unconscious bias

All interviewees were asked for their reflections on the content of the training. The themes emerging from these discussions can be placed within three broad categories:

- the definition of a 'fair and effective' search, in particular the distinction between belief and suspicion;
- establishing reasonable grounds; and
- conscious and unconscious bias.

Although some officers were unable to remember the definition of a 'fair and effective' search,[100] the majority recalled the shift from 'reasonable suspicion' to 'genuine belief'. When the definition of a 'fair and effective' search was raised during the interviews, five officers stated that they could not recall this part

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[97] Officer interviews 28.

[98] Officer interviews 10, 13 and 25.

[99] Officer interviews 25.

[100] As noted previously, officers from two forces did not receive training on this definition, so this finding refers to officers from the other four forces who received the definition in training.

of the training,[101] although three of the interviewees responded positively to further prompts about the key components of the definition by the interviewers.[102]

Speaking generally, seven officers stated that the definition made sense to them and was already part of their approach to conducting stop and searches.[103]

> Yes without remembering exactly what it was, what you are saying to me there is things that I would already consider naturally when I am searching somebody on the street. (Officer interview 30).

The shift from 'reasonable suspicion' to 'genuine belief' was one of the most contentious issues for officers

The topic of officers conducting searches on the basis of a 'genuine belief' rather than suspicion proved to be contentious for 15 officers,[104] with officer interviewee 21 stating: "The big issue that I think a lot of officers had with the training was this difference that we were going from suspicion to belief." Four officers who participated in the field observations expressed the opinion that this threshold was too high and felt that it would result in non-conduct of previously justified searches.[105] Another four officers suggested a need for more guidance on the distinction between belief and suspicion,[106] with one officer stating:

> In relation to the changing of making it believe, I think 'belief' is too high but I think some officers 'suspect' is too low. And I think giving examples of… where the Home Office or the College of Policing… think those benchmarks are would be helpful for officers because there is so many, we have all got so many differences of opinion and we all stop and search on the different levels of grounds, I think if there was more guidance telling us, "Yes, this is fine we are happy with this because...", and even then, "Yes, it's been checked by your sergeant", which I don't think that happens every time at all, but I think the sergeants will have all different views as well. (Officer interview 27)

Two interviewees spoke of the difficulties in managing this definition with their responsibilities in terms of maintaining public safety.[107] Officer interviewee 8 argued that "… the major benefit of preventing somebody walking around with a knife or stabbing far outweighs the inconvenience of somebody who hasn't got a knife being searched…"

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[101] Officer interviews 11, 12, 15, 26 and 30.

[102] Officer interviews 12, 26 and 30.

[103] Officer interviews 12, 26, 29, 30 and 7; and field observations 24 and 27.

[104] Officer interviews 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 21 and 27.

[105] Field observations 6, 8, 11 and 21.

[106] Officer interviews 21 and 27 and field observations 2 and 4.

[107] Officer interviews 8 and 21.

Five officers simply stated that they would apply this new threshold, with one interviewee, while acknowledging that the subject had been the focus of some heated disputes in his training session, saying that, "I wouldn't say it was restrictive; I think you have got to be pretty certain on your facts."[108]

Many officers had reservations about perceived changes to reasonable grounds for a search

Twenty-eight officers discussed the topic of establishing reasonable grounds for a search. Three interviewees were neutral in their feelings about the discussion on reasonable grounds, stating simply that they would apply the policy in practice.[109] Two interviewees were more positive about the definition,[110] with officer saying "… to be fair you have to have grounds, to have these grounds you have got to explain them in person…"

By contrast, the remaining officers had serious reservations about what they perceived as changes in establishing reasonable grounds, stemming from discussions around the definition of a 'fair and effective' search, which applied a standard of 'reasonable belief' rather than 'reasonable suspicion' (though, in fact, the legal threshold remains 'reasonable suspicion'). Speaking broadly about the change in approach, four officers were apprehensive about the potential consequences of the definition in practice.[111] One reported that the discussion led to "a lot of butting heads with the trainers". For this officer, his anxieties lay with the missed opportunities to detect crime due to the higher threshold. This was echoed by two other officers,[112] one of whom stated that:

> I still think that we need a degree of flexibility as police officers. If we're police officers of the correct calibre, we should be empowered to use our knowledge and our bobby's nose even to a certain degree, to make that decision and I don't like the fact, don't necessarily agree that because our hands are tied a little bit, some people who are committing crime are going to get away with it. (Officer interview 14)

Another interviewee claimed that the grounds for a search were now at the same level as those for an arrest.[113] In turn, officers suggested that they or other officers might choose to arrest rather than search suspects as a result of the perceived higher threshold for reasonable grounds for a search.[114] Another interviewee stated his apprehension that this higher threshold to be able to lawfully detain a member of the public "gives people more of an opportunity to run off or conceal, damage, etc., anything that they might have on them when they're not lawfully detained."[115]

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[108] Officer interview 4.

[109] Officer interviews 3, 5 and 12.

[110] Officer interviews 22 and 30.

[111] Officer interviews 2, 11, 13 and 26.

[112] Officer interviews 2 and 14.

[113] Officer interview 13.

[114] Field observations 2, 6, 25, 28 and 29.

[115] Officer interview 26.

It is worth noting that legal and procedural issues with the use of stop and search as a tactical option was discussed in all training sessions observed, although as noted in the previous chapter, making the distinction between 'tactic' and 'power' was not a formal part of the Guidance for Trainers. The phrase, "it's a power, not a tactic", (meaning stop and search should only be used when the law allows, and not just as a way of achieving policing goals) was clearly expressed in all training sessions observed. This was perceived by some as a lost capability; for example, one interviewee stated, "Before it was a power, a tactical option… that sort of proactive, productive policing, I think it's going to be lost."[116]

The introduction of the 'rule' on the smell of cannabis on its own and without other evidence being insufficient grounds for a search particularly animated 29 officers.[117] Of these 29, four officers simply stated that they would comply with this policy or that it was already their practice in deciding whether or not to search a member of the public.[118]

> So if I smell cannabis I am going to search you? I don't have a problem with that because I wouldn't do that anyway, I haven't done it before, I am going to stop and talk to the guy. (Officer interview 22)

The remaining 25 officers were far more critical in their response to the guidance and the rationale behind it. One officer, reflecting the broad concerns of this group, argued:

> We were told, you don't have any grounds to search that person, he may have smoked some cannabis, which is true, he may have smoked it and finished it and doesn't have any drugs on it now, but I have already formed that opinion that I can smell cannabis, there's an offence there isn't there? I will be searching him, I wouldn't be doing my job right if I didn't search him, I wouldn't have thought personally. I mean we are here to stop crime, prevent crime. (Officer interview 2)

A number of officers felt that this approach did not reflect the reality of policing or the expectations of the community, with one interviewee stating:

> Right, well the way I see it if we had a reasonable person test which is what we apply to a lot of things in the police, and we got Mrs Miggins and brought her down to his car with four lads smoking cannabis in it, and said to Mrs Miggins, "What would you prefer us to do, nothing or search them for drugs?" I think ten out of ten should say, "Yeah, I think we should search them for drugs because we can all smell drugs." …That's rubbish in my opinion, I'm sure there is some reason for it, and some[one] states a case somewhere that says that all of them smelled [of] it and perhaps somebody else down the road, and we have gone against their rights. But in actual fact in real life you are sat in a car smoking cannabis, you are going to get turned over. That's how it is. (Officer interview 9)

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[116] Officer interview 13. In fact, the use of stop and search as a tactical option has never been acceptable under PACE Code A, which suggests a prior level of misunderstanding, though it is not clear how widespread this misunderstanding was amongst officers in the pilot.

[117] Officer interviews 2, 3, 7, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 22, 15, 26, 27, 30 and field observations 7 and 9.

[118] Officer interviews 15 and 22.

Furthermore, another officer felt that by not pursuing a search on the basis of the smell of cannabis, the police were missing opportunities to expose more criminal behaviour:

> I think we're massively losing that chance to, not only potentially arrest someone for a significant find which I've had in the past, a small amount of cannabis, and they've got 50 grand's worth in the boot of the car, I disagree with it and I think unfortunately statistics don't represent the bigger picture of education, prevention and dealing with the offences that can unfold from it. (Officer interview 13)

Where training on unconscious bias was discussed by interviewees, it was generally perceived positively

The session on conscious and unconscious bias was generally perceived positively by officers, with nine interviewees reporting that the discussion on the topic was thought-provoking and managed well.[119] Reflecting an opinion held by the other eight interviewees, one officer stated that:

> Well the conscious and unconscious bias it's always good to remember that and keep that at the forefront because obviously people do… It's human nature for there to be some sort of bias… It's not a case of thinking or something that I do on purpose but sometimes I'd have a young group of males with their hoods up and then I would have the unconscious bias to go towards them, so it was good to go through that in the training and think, "Oh yeah", just remind yourself… (Officer interview 25)

Another interviewee echoed the view that the session encouraged greater reflection on their own preconceptions and prejudices:

> [W]hilst I was conscious of it anyway, doing the training sort of reinforces that no matter how hard you try and not pay attention to it, it's there in your head but then you need to sort of step away from that and base whatever you're going to do on the information you've got in front of you rather than sort of stuff that you've previously got in your head so that was an important part of it. (Officer interview 26)

Officers also mentioned the value of the discussion emerging from this session, and on two occasions expressed surprise and illumination at hearing about other officers' views and practices:

> Unconscious bias, actually one of the more shocking things that came out of it, I can't remember the specific example but somebody said something along the lines of they knew an officer or someone who only searched particular people for a particular reason and a lot of us in the room took a step back and deep breath as if to say, "What? Who is the person? What the hell are they playing at?" (Officer interview 30)

> [E]veryone's views were quite different which was quite interesting to see… because it had made me sit back and think actually because you cover completely different area and different demographic, I'm seeing things completely different to you purely because of the area I cover. (Officer interview 23)

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[119] Officer interviews 3, 16, 17, 18, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27 and 30.

However, two officers stated that while the topic was interesting and worthy of analysis, they took issue with the approach of presenting images of different people for discussion as somewhat shallow.[120] One officer reported:

> I don't think that was the right angle to look at unconscious bias. Just by looking at pictures of different people, it doesn't reflect anything. (Officer interview 17)

5.1.2 Officers were mostly positive about the format of the training

The knowledge check, and in particular the written grounds for discussion in the exercise on reasonable grounds, were generally well-received by the officers. Eight interviewees reported that the discussions emerging from the written grounds were thought-provoking and worthwhile,[121] with one interviewee saying that: "everyone's different at the end of the day, everyone has their own perception."[122] These responses also reflect the trainers' perception of these exercises as well-received by participants, as set out in Chapter 2.

Of those officers who participated in role-plays, the response was generally favourable, with four of the five interviewees who discussed the exercise of the view that it was a thought-provoking learning device.[123] However, officers' reactions to the videos tended to range from baffled to alienated, with nine officers taking issue with the depiction of police officers.[124] Only one officer found the videos 'useful.'[125] One interviewee stated that the videos portrayed:

> …cowboy police officers doing everything wrong. Very clichéd, what the media would portray as typical. It was so bad, I don't know why they showed it. They are teaching you to suck eggs. A trained monkey would have done a better job… [Police senior management was saying that] this is what we think you are doing out on the street. (Officer interview 18)

Almost all officers who were asked about the pre-read materials could not remember their content, although almost 70% of officers reported in the feedback sheets that they found the material 'fairly' or 'very useful' (though only 63% of officers reported reading all of the pre-read materials).

Thirteen officers spoke favourably about the length of the training, saying that one day was the appropriate amount of time to cover the topic of stop and search.[126] This sentiment was also clear in the feedback sheets, in which over 80% of officers reported that the length of the training was 'about right'. Fifteen officers were also explicitly enthusiastic about the degree of participation and freedom to express their opinion afforded to them during the training, the manner in which the discussion was handled by

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[120] Officer interview 18; field observation 16.

[121] Officer interviews 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 12, 17 and 30.

[122] Officer interview 20.

[123] Officer interviews 18, 21, 22 and 25.

[124] Officer interviews 9, 18, 23 and 30; and field observations 20, 21, 23, 24 and 28.

[125] Field observation 3.

[126] Officer interviews 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 20, 21, 22, 23, 26, 27 and 29.

the trainers, and the opportunity to hear from a diverse mix of officers in attendance.[127] In the words of one officer:

> No, I've never felt like that [that I had to withhold my opinion.] No, nobody in there did, even some perhaps not quite as gregarious as myself. No, it was very good actually and everybody was allowed to say what they thought and then we discussed, you know, why people thought like that and as I say, it was very relaxed, good training course actually. (Officer interview 14)

Similarly, 99% of officers reported in feedback sheets that they felt able to express their opinions in these sessions.

Officers were largely positive in their opinion of the trainers. Eleven officers reported that the trainers were clearly knowledgeable about the subject matter.[128] Seven expressed the view that the trainers' communications skills were extremely strong, which allowed them to present their material in a clear and straightforward manner.[129] Five interviewees praised their manner with attendees, saying that they asked for input and encouraged discussion.[130]

> [T]hey knew their stuff, knew how to engage with us and treated us like individuals and colleagues rather than children that were being taught. (Officer interview 11)

14 officers specifically mentioned the profile of the trainers as civilians or experienced officers.[131] Of these, ten spoke positively about being trained by officers who both 'knew their stuff' and understood the realities of policing.[132] In the words of one interviewee:

> I think [for] something like stop and search it is important to be taught by another police officer and it's no disrespect to civilian trainers, members of the public or non-police officers because I am not suggesting that they are not capable of teaching things, but there are certain things you won't know unless you've experienced doing it yourself… The officers that were doing the stop and search training, it was quite clear that they're police officers, they form the same opinion that we do about some of the stuff that comes out of the political levels and things like that and I think to then be able to… come at us with it, we've all been there, we've experienced this, we know how you feel and now we are going to deliver some training to develop you as a person. (Officer interview 25)

However, four officers stated that they would have preferred trainers who were active, full-time police officers:[133]

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[127] Officer interviews 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 20, 21, 23, 25 and 27.

[128] Officer interviews 5, 8, 10, 11, 14, 16, 21, 25 and 27 and field observations 21 and 30.

[129] Officer interviews 7, 10, 13, 16, 20, 23 and 29.

[130] Officer interviews 6, 11, 12, 14 and 24.

[131] Officer interviews 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 21, 23, 25, 26 and 30; and field observation 30.

[132] Officer interviews 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 21, 23 and 25; and field observation 30.

[133] Officer interviews 6, 15, 26 and 30.

> [Y]ou know the trainer is probably somebody that hasn't completed a stop and search for a long
> time and I don't know quite whether they are telling me the right answer or not. (Officer
> interview 30)

Almost all officers who completed the feedback sheets also expressed positive responses to the trainers and their understanding of the realities of policing. Only one officer complained that the trainers were too strict in controlling the discussion.[134]

A number of interviewees offered suggestions for improving the training. Six officers asked for more interactive practical exercises,[135] such as scenarios[136] or role-plays.[137] Six officers requested more content on engaging with members of the public during a search, such as communication skills.[138] Three asked for more guidance on how to write up their searches.[139] Another three suggested having more of a discussion on the differences in opinion on whether to conduct a search, such as drawing the distinction between a belief and a suspicion.[140] One suggested providing advice on what to look for in gathering grounds for a search and "odd bits of legislation" that might be useful to know when conducting a search,[141] and another asked for more guidance on senior management's priorities in what kinds of searches to conduct.[142]

5.1.3 Officers' understanding of why they had been selected to participate varied, and in some instances this impacted upon their engagement with the training

23 officer interviewees discussed the communications that they received in advance of the training. Of these, eight officers reported that they were informed that the session would be a pilot of a stop and search training.[143] Seven officers noted that they were advised that their selection to participate in the training was random. For example, one interviewee stated:

> I had an email sent to me stated that I had been selected and I believe it was explained that there
> was a 100 officers across the force being selected at random for the training – and I think it was
> prior to the course – and there was another 100 officers who wouldn't be told but were also
> having stop and check monitored and that was it really. (Officer interview 28)

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[134] Officer interview 9.

[135] Officer interviews 12, 16, 19 and 26; and field observations 17 and 20.

[136] Officer interviews 16 and 19.

[137] Officer interviews 12 and 26.

[138] Officer interviews 18, 21, 22 and 23; and field observations 15, 17 and 20.

[139] Officer interviews 7, 8 and 9.

[140] Officer interviews 26 and 27; and field observation 3.

[141] Officer interview 17.

[142] Officer interview 27.

[143] Officer interviews 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 24, 25 and 28.

However, four interviewees did not believe they were selected randomly to participate in the training, stating instead that they felt that their inclusion was a reflection on the volume or quality of their stop and search practices.[144] One particularly animated interviewee stated:

> In the seven years nearly I've been in the cops, it's surprising how many times I've been selected for these random studies. I wondered whether or not I was selected more based on they've probably accessed stop-searches and because I've searched more, I've been selected. When I was on division, when I was doing the drugs side, yeah I searched a hell of a lot of people. But my percentage of stop-searches in comparison to arrests, I think there was more positive results as a result of the search than there was a negative…. I don't think it's been random. Although it's presented to be. I'd rather they just come out and say, "Actually you've stop-searched 400 people or 500 people in your service, as a result you're in the top whatever percent of people who've searched, and we are doing a study, come along, let's see if it changes your attitude or do you believe actually that all of those searches were lawful?" (Officer interview 13)

Indeed, two officers[145] reported that they had been explicitly informed that they were chosen to participate due to their track record in conducting searches:

> I got an email and the email basically said that I had identified as someone who had used stop and search quite often, well I think, I'm trying to think back to the email. I think it was basically saying I have been identified as somehow who uses stop and search quite regularly in in my operational policing role and that I was basically invited along to take part in a pilot scheme to undergo some more thorough training on stop and search. (Officer interview 25)

As noted in the introduction, officers were randomly assigned to training from a pool of 'regular' users of stop and search. Officer selection into that pool on the basis of previous stop and search use – and informing officers of this – was consistent with the intended design of the RCT.

Seven officers[146] simply stated that they had been informed of their obligation to attend the training via email. The perceived lack of advance communication was a source of irritation for a number of these respondents, and may have impacted upon their receptiveness to the training. One interviewee stated that their selection for the training had not been communicated well:

> [Q]uite poorly actually. I'd just got an email through saying you're going on a stop and search course, be here at this time and this date. So again I don't think any of us were given... I certainly didn't get a briefing pack. However, I think other officers did and I initially tried to fight my attendance to go to the course because I didn't believe that I needed it, considering the sort of success that I've had with it. However, after the fact my view has changed of it in which I think everyone would benefit from going, but not necessarily the same course in its current form. (Officer interview 26)

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[144] Officer interviews 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 24, 25 and 28.

[145] Officer interviews 23 and 25.

[146] Officer interviews 4, 11, 14, 15, 22, 26 and 30.

Of the remaining interviewees, one understood from the communication that the training was part of a review into stop and search powers;[147] one reported that they could not remember advance communications relating to the training;[148] and one reported that they were sent the advance materials too late to inform their understanding of the course and their selection to attend it.[149]

5.2 How did the training course reportedly influence their stop and search practices?

Officers reported that their stop and search practice was changing, both in terms of quantity and quality of searches. However, as noted in the introduction, their changes in practice related to the training could not easily be untied from the broader changes to stop and search practice nationally.

5.2.1 Some officers reported that the training had prompted them to conduct fewer stop and searches, but this reported change could not be attributed to the training alone

The training was reported by seven officers to reduce the quantity of stop and searches being conducted by officers.[150] They partially attributed this to the change to the grounds required to conduct a stop and search (i.e. the shift from 'reasonable suspicion' to 'genuine belief').[151] One interviewee interpreted the training as an attempt to reduce the quantity of searches, which he found unhelpful:

> [It] should have been helpful because we were going through scenarios; I however didn't find it helpful. I thought it was the opposite, because I felt it was a case of trying to reduce the amount of searches we were doing. (Officer interview 8)

As noted earlier in the chapter, others understood that the training was part of an attempt to ensure that stop and searches were being used appropriately rather than to simply bring numbers down per se. For example, interviewee 30 detailed that stop and searches were decreasing "because we are looking for the overall positivity rather than the quantity of stopping and searching", meaning that he was now more concerned about actually finding the item he was looking for rather than doing a stop and search as a matter of routine.

However this should be considered against the backdrop of the 40% reduction in the use of stop and search at national level in 2014/15, which was discussed earlier in this report. Some of the wider factors affecting use of stop and search powers highlighted by officers included:

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[147] Officer interview 1.

[148] Officer interview 8.

[149] Officer interview 2.

[150] Officer interviews 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8 and 9.

[151] Officer interviews 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8 and 9.

- Receiving other training (which, in one case – personal safety training – was perceived to contradict elements of the training[152]) (13 officers)
- Public attitudes (27 officers) to, and media depictions (7 officers) of stop and search
- Changing nature of the job and resource constraints (i.e. more reactive, less proactive policing) (7)
- Ineffective technology (e.g. cumbersome and time-consuming electronic stop and search forms, with erratic mobile network coverage) (7)
- Fear of complaints from members of the public (3)
- Attitudes of their fellow officers (6)
- Messages from senior management, as noted in Chapter 4 (12)
- Messages of the use of stop and search powers from the Government (7)
- Performance indicators (1)

5.2.2 The training was reported to have had a positive impact on stop and search practice

Two officers reported that they were able to identify instances in which the training had influenced the quality of their stop and search encounters.[153] For example, one interviewee explained how the training had helped to improve his communication with members of the public being subjected to the power:

> …that's what I say to people now and it works better. "You're not under arrest but you are legally detained", and they go, "Okay, fine." (Officer interview 7)

One officer also spoke about now giving greater consideration to the grounds required to do a search. For example, one officer explained:

> I think from what I took from the training, it is better to sort of spend more time before you do the search. What we used to do, go out, right, he matches the description, "I'm going to search you lads", and that's it. It's more now, right, do I need to speak to them first? Do I really think these are our offenders? And I don't mean speak to them to find grounds, I mean speak to them to say, to sort of to not search them if you like. Do the opposite in fact. (Officer interview 7)

5.2.3 Some officers reported improved confidence in using the power

Four officers reported that the training had improved their confidence in using the power.[154] Officer interviewee 29, for example, described the training as having removed some of the ambiguity regarding decisions to stop and search a member of the public, while another officer expressed that he felt more confident that he would be able to account for his decision to conduct a stop and search:

> I think you are more aware… that you have got to be responsible for your actions now and the powers that you use, and you have got to get them bang on. (Officer interview 12)

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[152] Interviewee 2 mentioned a session on stop and search practice during a personal safety training, and claimed that officers participating in the training were put off from conducting searches because the trainers emphasised the harsh repercussions for searching without proper grounds.

[153] Officer interviews 6 and 7.

[154] Officer interviews 12, 23, 26 and 29.

Officer interviewee 23 described how some officers in his force were wary of conducting stop and searches in the light of the new procedures that were being introduced, but thought that the training would reassure some of these officers that they should conduct stop and searches as long as there were solid grounds to do so (he made reference to the videos that he had seen in class to demonstrate this point).

Furthermore, two interviewees reported challenging colleagues about grounds required for stop and search following the training.[155] For example, interviewee 30 explained that he had been able to correct his sergeant about the grounds required for conducting a vehicle search. The officer described how he had conducted the search on the basis of information he had seen through the automatic number plate recognition system, which his sergeant had believed was insufficient grounds on its own. However, following the training, the officer was able to articulate to his sergeant that it could be sufficient in some circumstances, to which the sergeant eventually agreed.

Only one officer expressed that the training would make officers less confident in conducting stop and searches because of uncertainty about what needed to be recorded in the forms.[156]

At least five interviewees directly alluded to spending more time prior to conducting a search.[157] Officer interviewee 10 explained that the training "has made me rationalise my gut feeling" so that he is now more self-aware about his decision making process when establishing grounds for a search. Interviewees were also able to identify instances in which they had not conducted a search that they would have normally done prior to the training, which can be seen as a positive outcome and in line with the goals of the training.[158] One officer explained:

> …the training that I've done makes me think, you know, so much more why I'm doing it. It's just given me an idea as to try and see it from other people's points of view, you know to explain more, to use intelligence more, to question more before you go in, because previously stop and search was, stop-search-question, whereas now it's stop-question-search isn't it really? (Officer interview 14)

However, this was not unanimously seen as a positive outcome. Officer interviewee 1 expressed frustration that searches now took more time as a result of the additional evidence required to conduct a stop and search: "it's putting barriers and obstacles in our way really to do our job."

Officers reported providing more detailed information in the stop and search forms

Seven officers highlighted reporting more detailed information in the stop and search forms as a means to account for their decision-making.[159] One Interviewee explained that he had made more effort to write greater details in the stop and search forms since doing the training, including putting GPS co-ordinates into the form. But doing so was not only for the benefit of accounting for one's actions to one's

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[155] Officer interviews 12, 30.

[156] Officer interview 10.

[157] Officer interviews 7, 10, 14, 21 and 23.

[158] Officer interviews 14, 27 and 30.

[159] Officer interviews 11, 13, 22, 24, 25, 29 and 30.

supervisors – as officer interviewee 25 explained, he now made greater efforts to clearly communicate the reasons for the stop and search in layman's terms on the form so that the person who had been searched has a comprehensible record of the rationale for the search.

In some circumstances, the training appeared to have limited impact on practice

A third of interviewed officers reported that the training had limited or no influence on their stop and search practice.[160] These interviewees explained that this was because the training simply reinforced what they had previously been doing in conducting stop and searches and that they had not learnt anything new. For at least three interviewees, the training did not match up to the reality of conducting stop and search, for example in terms of complying with GOWISELY in practice (e.g. during hostile encounters[161] or where shoplifters hand over their items almost immediately.)[162]

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[160] Officer interviews 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 16, 17, 20, 25 and 26.

[161] Officer interview 24.

[162] Officer interview 3.

6 Did trained officers apply their learning in practice, and how did they interact with the public during encounters after the training?

This chapter examines how officers who had received the training conducted their encounters with members of the public, including, but not limited to, stop and search encounters. The chapter draws on systematic quantitative and qualitative data gathered during 30 observations on-shift with the six forces, across a selection of response, neighbourhood and specialist officers during November and December 2015.

The chapter aims to address research question 5: "Did trained officers appear to apply their learning in practice and, if so, how?" and research question 6: "How did the police and public interact during encounters, and what factors were associated with better quality encounters?"

As set out in Chapter 1, the observational approach was designed both to capture searches (which was expected to be rare) as well as other kinds of police-initiated encounters with members of the public. As indicated earlier in the report, the use of stop and search powers has recently declined substantially, and additionally, the Crime Survey of England and Wales shows that only a small number of police-initiated encounters involve searches.[163] Despite their low frequency, in an attempt to directly answer the research questions at the heart of the present study, the analyses below examine the observed stop and search encounters while using the other police-initiated encounters as comparison where relevant.

Ultimately, nine stop and search encounters were observed. It should be clearly stated that the generalisations that can be drawn from such a small sample are extremely limited. With small non-random samples, there is a high risk that they do not represent the population from which they are purportedly drawn (in this case, all stop and search encounters). A sample size of nine does not allow for detailed statistical analysis of the data from the stop and search encounters. Thus the data presented below on stop and search encounters remains at the descriptive level.

At the same time, the observational exercise collected data on 99 encounters in total (including the nine stop and search encounters). In combination with the narratives, which provide in-depth descriptions of these encounters, these encounters provided insight into officer behaviour when interacting with members of the public and, more specifically, suspects (i.e. people the police believed to be involved in criminal or disorderly activities). The majority of this chapter is therefore based on the full 99 interaction dataset to

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[163] See Appendix A for more discussion.

contextualize the findings, and the full dataset can be statistically tested to provide insight – albeit indicative – into how these interactions with suspects tended, on the whole, to proceed.[164]

A full description of the quantitative dataset and a more comprehensive analysis of the nine stop and search encounters is provided at Appendix A, and additional data tables are presented at Appendix B. The chapter analyses the quantitative data and, where relevant, provides supporting information from the qualitative narratives. As was noted in the introduction, some data from narratives specifically relating to field interviews about the training or stop and search practice generally (rather than specifically related to an encounter) has been analysed alongside the officer interviews.[165]

6.1 Did trained officers appear to apply their learning in practice?

6.1.1 Officers appeared to follow the correct stop and search process in most cases

As noted earlier in the report, there were substantial issues for the research team (and indeed those involved in the training pilot) in identifying exactly what learning from the training was meant to be put into practice by officers. Additionally, given the very limited number of actual stop and search encounters observed, there are few conclusive statements that can be made to answer this question.

Nonetheless, it was relatively consistently observed in training sessions that officers were being reminded of the correct stop and search procedures in terms of GOWISELY and other steps required in a stop and search encounter, and it appears from the analysis of patrol observations that officers were usually compliant with these technical or legal requirements in the observed encounters. An example of a stop and search that was observed as in line with the learning standards is provided from the observational narratives:

> O1… tells the man he is being searched for cannabis under section 23 of the Misuse of Drugs Act. His delivery is fast and natural. He begins by asking whether he has anything sharp or anything he shouldn't have on him. C1 shakes his head. O1 then says his name and that he's from XXX Police Station… He then says he's searching the man because there was a strong smell of cannabis and because he walked away on seeing a police officer, which gives him ground to

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[164] It is not possible to draw a 'random' sample of encounters between suspects and police within observational studies such as this one (since the population of all police encounters with suspects is unspecified). Nonetheless, while the research team was not able to proactively randomise field observations, the observed encounters were treated as a sample from a superpopulation – all possible encounters that could have occurred at those times and places – which justified the use of inferential statistics in this chapter.

[165] To preserve anonymity of the officers involved, data from narratives is presented without any identifying information relating to the officer, and each narrative and encounter have been assigned a number reflecting their chronological order. In recording field notes, the officer being observed was recorded as 'O1', and other officers involved numbered sequentially as 'O2', 'O3' and so on. The citizens were similarly recorded as 'C1', 'C2' and so on. This notation is reflected in passages from field notes where these are included.

> suspect he has cannabis… After checking around C1's neckline, he pats down the man's top and
> trousers… O1 also checks around the top of his socks and shoes. (Stop and search encounter 1)[166]

Trained officers, or their colleagues if they were conducting the search as a team, rarely missed the key steps involved in GOWISELY. Indeed, observers recorded specific variables during each search to confirm which of the required steps had been followed, and the only step required in a search that was observed as missed more than once across the nine encounters was the officer clearly stating the name of the station where they worked (which was missed in two encounters). The technical compliance involved in observed stop and search encounters is further elaborated at Appendix A.

6.2 How did the police and public interact during encounters?

6.2.1 Officers displayed elements of procedural justice and effective communication to a variable extent

As outlined above, the technical or legal aspects of officer behaviour during the observed stop and search encounters was in general in compliance with the College learning standards. However there are other aspects of such encounters, such as the nature and quality of officers' treatment of members of the public during searches and other encounters, which are only partially covered by explicit guidelines. Here more variation was identified in officer behaviour.

Table 6.1 reports the frequencies at which procedural justice and/or effective communication elements were observed during the encounters. The behaviours described in this table *do not* reflect the extent or type of authority exercised by the officer, but rather *how* it was exercised. It should be noted that although the concepts measured by these items may appear somewhat vague (e.g. 'politeness'), they are clearly defined in the instrument in order to make their coding clear, consistent and objective (see coding instructions in Appendix C).

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[166] In this encounter, the suspect being searched suggested that the procedure was being followed for the benefit of the observer, and that in previous searches experienced by the suspect, important steps had been left out (for example, the suspect had not been offered a receipt in past experiences). This may reflect an observer effect that encouraged proper procedural steps by the officer, or could be an instance of the suspect making a (potentially) unsubstantiated complaint due to the observer's presence.

Table 6.1: Police behaviour during police-initiated interactions with suspects

	Stop and search encounters		Other encounters with suspects	
	Yes	Total valid encounters [a]	Yes	Total valid encounters [a]
1. Did the officer *ask* the suspect to provide their viewpoint about the matter of interest in this encounter?	5	8	60	82
2. Did the suspect *provide* their viewpoint about the matter of interest in this encounter? (in response to being asked by the officer or on their own initiative)	5	8	69	82
3. If the suspect provided their information/viewpoint, was the officer an active/attentive listener?	5	5	62	69
4. Did the officer explain to the suspect why the police became involved in this situation?	8	8	74	88
5. Did the officer/another officer present explicitly specify the resolution of the situation?	5	8	52	86
6. Did the officer/another officer present explain *why* s/he chose to resolve the situation as s/he did?	4	8	39	85
7. Was the officer explicitly polite to the suspect at any point during this encounter?	5	9	64	87
8. Did the officer ask the suspect about his/her wellbeing or ask others about the suspect's wellbeing in a way that the suspect observed it?	0	8	24	88
9. Did the officer offer comfort or reassurance to the suspect at any point during the encounter?	3	8	20	88
10. Did the officer provide/arrange/offer any physical or practical assistance to the suspect at any point during the encounter?	2	9	11	87
11. Did the officer provide/offer to provide advice on how the suspect could handle the situation or deal with the problem at any point during the encounter?	3	9	37	88
12. Did the officer use 'effective communication' several times/consistently throughout the encounter?	4	9	51	88

[a] Missing values and cases where the observer could not determine were excluded.

Table 6.1 shows some variability in the extent to which the officers comply with the College learning standards – we find a moderate to high level of compliance with some types of behaviours, and much less with others. For example, in all eight stop and search encounters for which we had information, the officer explained to the individual why they were stopped. This was evidenced in stop and search encounter 3:

> [I]n the course of dealing with a woman under the influence of alcohol who was reported to be waving a knife, after she refuses to comply with the officer's request to show him her hands and

shouts some kind of comment that she either doesn't have to comply or questions why she should comply, the officer responds in a formal, commanding (and less aggressive tone) that someone has reported that she has a knife. This seems to satisfy C1 that she should comply.

Similarly, in stop and search encounter 9, the observer reported that O1, who initiated the stop, "spoke to both citizens and told them they knew why they were there, railway staff had notified them about the situation and they now needed to give their details (name and address) as they did not pay for a ticket."

Likewise, in a small majority of cases, for both stop and search (5/8) and other police-initiated encounters (60/82), the officer observed invited the suspect to tell "their side of the story." In most cases, the suspect provided their viewpoint. In all five stop and search encounters where the suspects expressed their views, the officers appeared to pay close attention. For example, in stop and search encounter 5:

> O1 observed an individual pushing a young girl's bike and suspected he had stolen it. He pulls his vehicle alongside the citizen, "winds down the window and asks C1 in a friendly but inquisitive tone "where are you going with that bike?" C1 replies with a street name and O1, seeming surprised, says that the street is back the way he has just come from. O1 asks where he has come from and C1 seems to hesitate and look up and down the street, remaining quiet for about five seconds. O1 asks him again where he is going and he again looks around and says, "err to [street name]". He appears to be avoiding answering O1's questions. O1 is friendly but adopts a more authoritative tone while C1 has a neutral tone. O1 asks where he got the bike from and after a few moments of hesitation, C1 says that the bike is his girlfriend's. O1 responds by joking, "girlfriend? How old is your girlfriend? Ten?" (referring to the fact that the bike is clearly a child's) to which C1 laughs.

At the same time, in only half of the stop and search encounters (4/8) did the officer explain to the suspect why he/she chose to resolve the situation as they did. A similar ratio was also found for other types of encounters (39/85). Effective communication techniques were also observed in less than half of the stop and search encounters, though were somewhat more prevalent in other contexts (4/9 in stop and search; 51/88 in other encounters with suspects) and explicit politeness (e.g. 'please', 'thank you', 'good afternoon', 'I'm sorry for the trouble' or actively trying to put the suspect at ease) – were recorded in only five of the nine stop and search encounters, and in 64 of the 87 other police-initiated encounters.

One example of effective communication and politeness was found in stop and search encounter 5 described above. After being dissatisfied with C1's answers concerning the girl's bike, O1 decided to detain the individual for the purpose of a search, focused on determining whether the bike is registered as stolen. The observer reported that:

> O1 reassures C1 by saying, "I'll only keep you a minute pal, we just want to check the bike"… O1 then says to C1 something along the lines of, 'you understand don't you? If it was your daughter's bike being walked up the street, you'd want us to stop them wouldn't you?'…" O1 concludes the encounter with "sorry to bother you pal. Have a good night."

Similarly, four types of behaviours, all representing the trustworthy motives element of procedural justice, show particularly low frequencies in both stop and search and other police-initiated encounters. They included: inquiring about the suspect's wellbeing; offering him/her comfort/reassurance; offering physical/practical assistance; or offering advice about the present situation/problem. An example of such

displays of concern was found in stop and search encounter 9. After radioing the details of a suspect who was stopped after he took the train without a ticket and refused to give his details to staff, O1 found out that C1 was wanted by a different police force for not showing up in court, and thus handcuffed him. C1, frightened, protested and claimed that he did show up. In response:

> O1 immediately responded trying verbally to calm them down and explaining he will check immediately if it is a mistake. He addressed C1 by name and told him not to worry, that if it was a mistake he would immediately take the cuffs off, and make sure the error was fixed so that it would not happen again. He then asked O2 if he could 'cut the line' with the support service so that he could take the cuffs off C1. [At the end of the encounter] O1 apologized to C1 for the handcuffs, explained again why the mistake happened and promised again he would make sure the mistake in the records had been corrected.

A lack of police engagement in behaviours that display care and concern for the suspect or other member of the public, and their wellbeing is in line with recent findings from the US (Jonathan-Zamir et al., 2015; Mastrofski et al., 2016). The research showed that actions to encourage trust in police motives were the least frequent of the four elements of procedural justice[167] in officer behaviour during police encounters with the public. One explanation is that such behaviours are often not relevant to the circumstances of the encounter, that is, they are not requested by the member of the public and the officer does not identify a need to initiate them. Another possible explanation is that officers do not view this type of empathy and emotional/practical support as part of their job (e.g. Cain, 1973; Holdaway, 1983; Smith and Gray, 1985; also see review by Paoline, 2003).

In sum, unlike the technical or legal elements of conducting a stop and search, in which overall compliance with the College learning standards was observed, there appeared to be more variation in the procedural justice and effective communication elements, both of which represent not what the officers do but how they do it. Prior studies have shown the possibility that these can be improved by training, at least in the context of police/victim interactions (Wheller et al., 2013). This suggests particular room for improvement in the areas of transparent decision-making processes, explicit politeness, and explicit displays of care and concern for the people involved and their wellbeing.

6.2.2 Suspects respond more negatively in stop and search encounters than in other police-initiated interactions with suspects.

Table 6.2 presents the frequencies at which various behaviours of suspects were observed, comparing stop and search encounters with other police-initiated encounters (i.e. those where the member of the public was viewed by the police as a suspect at some point, but where no search was carried out). It should be noted that at the beginning of the encounter (see items 1-6), it was often not clear if the interaction would develop into a stop and search or not, and on this basis constitute an appropriate comparison for stop and search encounters. Nevertheless, it is also worth recognising that once a search takes place, stop and search encounters may be more accusatory and potentially more confrontational than some other types of police-

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[167] Namely: participation; dignity; neutrality; and trustworthy motives.

initiated contact with suspects (see items 7-8). Additionally, the small number of stop and search encounters in the dataset means that comparisons across encounter type are indicative at best.

Unlike the data reported in Table 6.1, which shows much similarity in police behaviour across stop and searches and other police-initiated encounters, Table 6.2 shows some interesting differences, which, overall, suggest more negative suspect attitudes and behaviours in stop and search encounters compared to other types of encounter with suspects. As mentioned earlier, this conclusion should be treated cautiously due to the very small sample of stop and search encounters. Nevertheless, some examples of this are provided below.

Table 6.2: Suspect behaviour during interactions

	Stop and search encounters		All other encounters with suspects	
	Yes	Total valid encounters*	Yes	Total valid encounters*
1. At the *beginning* of this suspect's involvement in the encounter, did the suspect display a *positive* attitude toward the observed officer's handling of the situation?	0	8	16	83
2. At the *beginning* of this suspect's involvement in the encounter, did the suspect display a *negative* attitude toward the observed officer's handling of the situation?	4	8	20	83
3. Did the suspect indicate the source of this *beginning* attitude?	3	7	16	79
4. If the suspect indicated the source of this *beginning* attitude, was it focused on the officer's decision to initiate the encounter?	3	3	8	16
5. Was the suspect's disposition at the *beginning* of the encounter calm, neutral or friendly?	4	9	53	87
6. Was the suspect's disposition at the *beginning* of the encounter agitated, upset or aggressive?	4	9	23	87
7. At the *end* of this suspect's involvement in the encounter, did the suspect display a *positive* attitude toward the observed officer's handling of the situation?	3	9	40	83
8. At the *end* of this suspect's involvement in the encounter, did the suspect display a *negative* attitude toward the observed officer's handling of the situation?	2	9	11	82
9. Did the suspect provide their viewpoint about the matter of interest in this encounter? (in response to being asked by the officer or on their own initiative)	5	8	69	82
10. Did the suspect show *respect* to the observed officer at any point during the encounter?	2	8	31	85
11. Did the suspect show *disrespect* to the observed officer at any point during the encounter?	0	9	10	86

In none of the eight stop and search encounters for which an observation was available did the suspect involved display an initial, positive attitude toward the police, while in half (4) the suspect displayed an explicit negative one. Although displays of preliminary positive attitudes were also infrequent other encounters with suspects, their ratio was higher (16/83). The ratio was smaller for negative ones (20/83). In all three stop and search cases where the suspect clarified the source of their initial attitude, the reason was the officer's decision to initiate the encounter as opposed to the nature of the officer's treatment at the beginning of the encounter. This was the case in only half (8/16) of the other police-initiated encounters where the source of the suspect's attitude was obvious to the observer.

For example, in stop and search encounter 1, the observer indicated:

> O1 is talking to C1, who is now sitting on the wall. He keeps moving his arms around vigorously and moving his head and upper body side to side. He is unhappy to be talking to the police. He keeps protesting about what is happening, but not in a disrespectful way: 'What are you doing this for?'… I think O1 then says he's going to be searching the man for drugs. "What?!" C1 exclaims, who is unhappy. Talking to C2, C1 says in a slightly accusing tone: "All this for a f*cking spliff, [name of C2], a f*cking spliff, it's just a caution, you should just take it".

Another example is provided in stop and search encounter 3 described above. In response to a report about a woman waving a knife, O1, upon arrival at the scene, shouted to the woman to show him her hands. She did not comply, and screamed and shouted at both O1 and another person present. The observer described:

> …I cannot make out her words but there are a lot of expletives. O1 shouts at her to, "shut up and show me your hands" in a commanding and perhaps slightly aggressive tone. C1 continues to scream and shout expletives which include some kind of comment that she either doesn't have to comply or questions why she should comply.

In almost half (4) of the nine stop and search encounters, the suspects began the encounter calm, neutral or even friendly. At the same time, in an equal number, they were agitated, upset or aggressive toward the police. In the other encounters, a larger proportion of suspects with a positive disposition (53/87) and a smaller proportion with a negative one (23/87) were found. Finally, in one-third of the stop and search encounters (3/9), the suspect showed an explicit, positive attitude toward the police handling of the situation at the encounter's conclusion. This was the case in half (40/82) other types of encounters with suspects. A unique example can be found in stop and search encounter 5 mentioned above. The observer reported that at the encounter's conclusion:

> C1 seems happy with the interaction with O1 and, perhaps instinctively, tells O1, "alright, you too, thanks for that." He then immediately laughs at himself and says in a jovial tone, "Ha! I mean not thanks for that I guess. See you later."

Similarly, at the conclusion of stop and search encounter 9, "both citizens thanked both officers [saying] 'thanks', 'cheers'."

6.3 What factors were associated with better quality encounters?

In addition to the analyses presented thus far, the dataset of all 99 police-initiated encounters with suspects was analysed to probe into the dynamics of the encounters that were observed. The following section addresses two questions. First, was there an association between the behaviour and visible characteristics of the suspect and officer behaviour? Second, to what extent did the apparent attitude of the suspect change over the course of the encounter – and why?

6.3.1 Officer behaviour was related to the characteristics and behaviour of suspects

Much of the literature indicates that the way a member of the public behaves in relation to the officer can influence the way the officer her or himself acts (Mastrofski, Reisig, and McCluskey, 2002; Mastrofski, Snipes, Parks, and Maxwell, 2000; Rossler and Terrill, 2012; Sun, 2003, 2006; Sun and Payne, 2004; Sun, Payne, and Wu, 2008). It is thus reasonable to expect that officers are more or less likely to behave in procedurally fair ways, depending on the attitude the member of the public presents toward them. Equally, the personal characteristics of a member of the public might affect the way police act in relation to them, although the literature show less consistent effects for characteristics such as sex, race and wealth (see e.g. reviews by National Research Council, 2004; Worden and McLean, 2014.

Using the temporal order of the items in the observational dataset, it is possible to explore the relationship between suspect expressed attitudes and police behaviour. Observers coded suspect attitude towards the police at the beginning of each encounter – i.e., before the officer had done much other than 'stop' them. From this, it is therefore possible to consider the association between the way suspects 'presented' to the police and subsequent officer behaviour, as captured by four key variables: politeness, making a wellbeing enquiry, providing reassurance and explaining police involvement. These four variables represent some of the key elements of procedural justice. The obvious hypothesis is that police officers are more likely to respond positively to people who themselves display positive attitudes, although it could equally be that officers are more likely to engage in certain positive actions in order to deal with 'difficult customers'. The relationship between the visible characteristics of the suspect, and their expressed attitude, and officer behaviour in a similar manner can thus be examined via statistical testing.

Table 6.3 shows results from a series of binary logistic regression models predicting each of the four police behaviours listed above. Included as predictor variables were, most importantly, the suspect's initial attitude, but the models also consider the age of the suspect (13-18 compared with all other ages), their visible ethnic appearance (white compared with all others), and physical appearance as assessed by observers (described as 'scruffy' or 'dishevelled', compared with others). Separate models – not shown here – tested three further suspect-level variables, gender, level of intoxication (if any) and whether the individual was known to the officer involved.[168] These did not prove significant in any model, with one

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[168] The availability of variables capturing the characteristics of the citizens was of course limited to those included in the observation tool (see Appendix C), which, in turn, was limited by what an observer could realistically expect to record about an individual based on their physical appearance, what they said and how they said it. The models reported in Table 6.3 are concerned with the possible effect on officer behaviour of the way an individual 'presented' to police, which is why measures of physical appearance, attitude and level of intoxication were tested.

notable exception: the police explained their involvement in the situation in *all* of the 19 encounters involving female suspects.

Results from the models can be summarized as follows:

- Officers were more likely to be polite and to make a wellbeing enquiry, if the suspect started with a positive attitude.
- Officers were also more likely to make such a wellbeing enquiry and offer reassurance, if the person they were dealing with was scruffy or dishevelled.
- White suspects were less likely to be offered reassurance than those from visible minority groups, but more likely to be asked about their wellbeing.
- Officers were less likely to be polite and to explain their involvement to young people aged under 18

Table 6.3: Binary logistic regression models predicting key elements of police behaviour

Beta coefficients (Standard errors)	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
	Officer polite	Wellbeing enquiry	Reassurance	Explain involvement
Suspect aged 13-18	-2.95**	0.03	-0.56	-2.03**
	(1.22)	(1.00)	(1.21)	(0.96)
Suspect White	-0.77	1.21*	-1.34**	-0.33
	(0.58)	(0.72)	(0.59)	(0.73)
Suspect scruffy/dishevelled	2.17*	1.72**	0.84	0.08
	(1.14)	(0.64)	(0.66)	(0.81)
	0.5	1.25**	1.65**	-0.25
Suspect began with positive attitude	(0.65)	(0.59)	(0.63)	(0.76)
Constant	1.38**	-2.74**	-0.84**	2.26**
	(0.49)	(0.7)	(0.42)	(0.64)
N	96	96	96	96

* p≤.1, ** p≤.05

These results can be presented in terms of fitted or predicted probabilities calculated from the models. This provides a way of translating the regression coefficients shown in Table 6.3 into an intuitively meaningful quantity – the probability of a particular police behaviour occurring given a particular suspect characteristic or behaviour. Such probabilities range, by definition, from 0 to 1 – officer behaviour that is certain to occur has a probability of 1, while behaviour that is certain not to occur has a probability of 0. In the context of the models shown in Table 6.3, the nearer a fitted value is to 1 the more likely a particular officer behaviour was to have taken place, given a particular combination of suspect characteristics.

For example, holding constant the other variables in the model, if the suspect started the encounter displaying a positive attitude the probability of the officer(s) being polite was .95. In other words, the officer was almost certain to be polite. If, however, the suspect did not have a positive attitude at the beginning, the probability of the officer being overtly polite toward them fell to .68. Similarly, all else equal, the probability of the officer making a wellbeing enquiry when the suspect was initially positive was .52, but this fell to .16 if the suspect did not display an initially positive attitude. It is also worth noting just how much less likely police were to be polite, or explain their involvement, to individuals aged 18 or under. Holding the other variables in the model constant, the probability of police displaying polite behaviour was .79 if the individual was over 18, but it was just .16 if they were 18 or under.

These findings, while far from conclusive due the limitations of the data, nevertheless concur with the existing literature, and the idea that the way people 'present' to police can shape the manner in which officers deal with them (see review by Mastrofski et al., 2016). It seems police are more likely to use key elements of procedural justice when those they encounter are already displaying a positive attitude towards them. This might suggest that this would lead to a positive feedback loop in such encounters, as initially positive or friendly interaction promotes further positive interaction. However, if police are less likely to act in procedurally just ways to people who do not present with a positive attitude, this might lead to a negative feedback loop within the encounter, as the failure to act in a procedurally just way triggers greater suspect dissatisfaction.

6.3.2 Procedurally fair officer behaviour was associated with positive change in suspect attitudes

A key claim of procedural justice research is that police can enhance the quality of interactions with members of the public, and generate higher levels of compliance and satisfaction, by acting in a procedurally fair manner. One implication of this is that procedural justice can 'oil the wheels' of difficult or confrontational encounters, making them easier for public and officer alike.

Analysis of the 99 police-initiated interactions with suspects again allows consideration of this important issue. Observers coded the visible attitude of suspects at the beginning and end of each encounter, meaning it is possible to examine what factors were associated with change in attitudes over the course of the encounter. Overall, for searches and all the other types of encounters (n=91):

- 26% of suspects appeared to have a negative attitude toward the police officers involved at the beginning of the encounter;
- 56% had a neutral or ambiguous attitude; and
- 18% had a positive attitude.

By the end of the encounter, these figures were respectively:

- 14%;
- 38%; and
- 47%.

The relationship between beginning and end attitudes is shown in Table 6.4. Within each category of initial attitudes (negative, neutral/ambiguous, and positive) the most likely outcome was for a suspect to

remain in the same category at the end of the encounter. Some 46% of those who were negative at the beginning were negative at the end, while almost all (93%) of those who displayed initially positive attitudes remained positive at the end. Yet there was also significant movement across categories, almost all of it in a positive direction. Some 21% of those displaying initially negative attitudes were positive by the end, while 45% were of those with initially neutral/ambiguous attitudes. In a general sense, then, the encounters during the observations seem to have been handled relatively well, although there was also room for improvement.

Table 6.4: Suspect attitudes at the end of the encounter by attitudes at the beginning[169]

Suspect attitude at beginning	Suspect attitude at end			Total (n) (=100%)
	Negative	Neutral/ ambiguous	Positive	
Negative	46%	33%	21%	24
Neutral/ambiguous	2%	53%	45%	47
Positive	6%	0%	94%	16
Total	15	38	47	87

Regression modelling of suspect attitude at the end of the encounter was used to investigate which if any aspects of officer behaviour were associated with change in suspect attitude. A series of binary logistic regression models were estimated that predicted the probability of the suspect involved having an apparently positive attitude at the end of the encounter (compared with a negative or neutral/ambiguous attitude). Since almost all of those suspects who started with a positive attitude retained this at the end, these cases are excluded from the analysis (n=16).

Each model tested a different officer behaviour variable as a predictor:

- whether the officer(s) explained police involvement in the situation (which they did in 82% of cases overall, and in 86% where the suspect was not initially positive);
- whether they were polite (72% and 69% respectively);
- whether they offered reassurance (23% and 21%, respectively); and
- whether they enquired after the suspect's wellbeing (24% and 19%, respectively).

In addition to the officer behaviour variables, suspect attitude at the beginning of the encounter (neutral/ambiguous compared with negative) was also included as a covariate – this means that the regression coefficients for the officer behaviour variables can be (loosely) interpreted as representing the probability of a change in demeanour from negative or neutral/ambiguous to positive over the course of the encounter.

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[169] Note that the overall number is reduced as beginning and end attitudes were not coded for all encounters.

Results from these models are shown in Table 6.5. Holding constant initial attitudes, suspects were more likely to have a positive attitude at the end of the encounter if the officer(s):

- were polite (model 1);
- enquired after their wellbeing (model 2); or
- offered reassurance (model 3).

By contrast, there was no significant association between explaining police involvement and the suspect's attitude at the end of the encounter (model 4), although even here the regression coefficient was positive.

Table 6.5 Binary logistic regression models predicting the probability of a positive suspect attitude at the end of the encounter

Beta coefficients (Standard errors)	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Suspect neutral at beginning	0.91	0.91	0.84	1.21**
	(0.6)	(0.62)	(0.63)	(0.59)
Officer(s) were polite	1.02*			
	(0.6)			
Officer(s) made wellbeing enquiry		1.59**		
		(0.68)		
Officer(s) offered reassurance			1.88**	
			(0.67)	
Officer(s) explained involvement				0.63
				(0.76)
Constant	-1.86**	-1.46**	-1.52**	-1.87**
	(0.69)	(0.55)	(0.56)	(0.88)
N	68	68	68	68

* p≤.1, ** p≤.05

The magnitude of these statistical effects can be shown more clearly by again calculating fitted probabilities from the models. For example, if a suspect started the encounter with a neutral/negative attitude toward police, and the officers were not polite, the probability of that individual finishing the encounter in an apparently positive frame of mind was .14; but if police were polite this probability rose to .30. For an initially neutral/negative suspect who did not receive reassurance from police, the probability of a positive demeanour by the end of the encounter was .34, but if the police did provide reassurance this probability rose to .77.

As with the rest of the analysis presented here, these results are far from conclusive. Not only are they based on a small sample, they also take no account of the clustering of suspects and officers within encounters, shifts and police forces. However, they suggest quite strongly that when officers were polite,

asked after people's wellbeing and provided reassurance to those they stopped, this was likely to shift attitudes of the suspects in a positive direction.

6.4 Discussion

As noted earlier, the conclusions concerning the conduct of stop and search encounters that can be drawn from such a small sample are very limited and should be considered with caution. Nevertheless, overall, the data from observations of patrol officers interacting with members of the public suggested relatively high levels of compliance with the technical or legal elements of conducting a stop and search, but less compliance with the principles of procedural justice and effective communication. For example, while officers rarely failed to explain the grounds of the search to the suspect, specify the item they are looking for, or explain the legal power being used, they often do not elaborate on the reasoning behind the resolution of the situation, show empathy, display concern or provide advice. Also, they did not always show explicit signs of politeness (e.g. statements to suspects such as 'good morning' or 'thank you' within the encounter). As discussed in the next chapter, this suggested that these types of procedural justice-oriented behaviours and their importance (both practical and ethical) might usefully be reinforced in the training. The need for such training is underlined by the finding that officers were less likely to behave in a procedurally just manner if suspects did not display a positive attitude toward them during the initial phases of an encounter. Arguably, procedural justice is no less important than strict technical compliance, in order that such encounters go as smoothly as possible, though of course, compliance with the law is also essential in these encounters.

Moreover, although the behaviour of officers does not appear systematically different between stop and search and other police-initiated encounters with suspects, the reaction of suspects to stop and search encounters appears somewhat more negative, perhaps as a result of highly publicized criticism, negative past experiences, and the intrusive nature of the searches. Observers did not witness a single stop and search encounter where the suspect displayed an initial positive attitude towards the police, and in only three of the nine observed did they display a positive attitude at the encounter's conclusion. In all cases, where the suspect held an initial negative attitude and was clear about its source, it was the officer's decision to initiate the encounter that prompted them. These suspects were also rarely polite to the officer. Given the context of the stop and search pilot, this finding is not surprising, and reinforces the need to continue focusing on satisfaction and legitimacy despite the tension inherent in stop and search encounters. Based on the large literature on procedural justice, coupled with the relatively low frequency of such behaviours documented in the observations, this again reiterates the importance of reinforcing procedural justice in police training.

7 Implications for training re-design and implementation

This chapter presents a number of implications from the findings of this report and the synthesis workshop with stakeholders, which bear on both the re-design of the training package for national roll-out, as well as its communication and implementation throughout England and Wales.

7.1 For national roll-out, a clear and unambiguous statement of purpose for the training needs to be developed and successfully communicated to all stakeholders in advance of the training

It is clear from our analysis that not all officers attending the training, trainers, or stakeholders saw the purpose of the training in the same way, and there was some confusion within the trainer community regarding the level of training instruction and support that would be provided by the College. Further, officers attending the training were given differing messages when recruited to the course and during the course itself about the nature and purpose of the training. More consistency and less ambiguity in these messages, whether delivered in a manual or guidance-based approach, is likely to be an essential factor in ensuring the training achieves its goals on a national level. If a consistent message already exists, this needs to be communicated clearly to stakeholders and force leads, and its cascading throughout forces monitored to ensure understanding.

Given the findings in this study, it would not seem to be sufficient to communicate such a message from the College to a single force-level contact or through a briefing sheet or memo and assume that the message will be understood and reflected accurately throughout each force. As has been seen in the pilot, the communication of the purpose of the training has a number of relevant channels where inconsistencies and miscommunication can arise between:

- units and staff within the College;
- the College, national stakeholders, and force-level leadership;
- the College and force-level trainers; and
- force-level leadership, trainers, supervisors and officers.

Each of these channels of communication should be monitored by those involved in the national roll-out and all reasonable efforts made to ensure that the officers receiving the training are receiving a consistent and accurate message regarding why the training has been developed and what it is meant to achieve.

7.2 It is unclear whether a stop and search-specific training will achieve the goals of the designers

The observed training sessions were predominantly focused on the law, reasonable grounds and technical compliance with procedure. Data from all sources in this evaluation suggested that the police involved in the pilot had reasonably good technical knowledge of the main aspects of stop and search, although there were indications that certain aspects (such as the distinction between a power and a tactic) were less well-understood. While in interviews police officers indicated that they appreciated an opportunity for a refresher of this knowledge, addressing gaps in knowledge around the technical-legal aspects of stop and search did not seem from observations of patrols to be the main priority area for improvements, given the intentions of the training pilot overall. The skills that did not receive extensive focus in the training, and which appeared to be more limited during observations, were those surrounding procedural justice, effective communication, unconscious/conscious bias, and managing difficult individuals in complex situations.

If the goals of the training are primarily to improve the quality of police encounters with members of the public and encourage a more reflective and unbiased approach to the choice to conduct a search, it is not clear that a focus that separates stop and search from the wider skillset required for police and public interactions is helpful – conceptually or practically – in designing or delivering training. By treating stop and search as a particular and unique kind of encounter, this may encourage police officers to see it in such terms – that is, to treat stop and search practice as fundamentally different from other police interactions with the public – rather than as following the essential rules of fair, unbiased and procedurally just conduct that all of their encounters should aspire to. Moreover, given the fall in number of searches in recent years – and wider organisational and political context of the training suggested by officer interviews, which some officers said result in them carrying out fewer searches – there may be limited returns from a course specifically aimed at stop and search, unless that course finds ways to bridge the learning to other police encounters with the public.

This is not to say that the updated training should not include 'refresher' content on the legal and technical aspects of stop and search practice, since many officers reported appreciating this content. As well, the officers selected to the training regularly use stop and search powers, and refresher content may be even more valuable to those who very rarely use the powers elsewhere in the police service. Moreover, given the emotive power of stop and search in particular, the re-designed training may still focus on stop and search as a priority area for improvement. Nonetheless, from the findings in this report, it appears that a different balance could be struck within the course content to better build the wider skills surrounding police encounters with the public.

7.3 Re-designed training materials need to balance consistency in messaging and implementation with force-level needs

There were differences of opinion at both national and force levels regarding how the training materials might be improved. While more consistent messaging around the training appears essential in any re-design, this does not mean that a strict manual-based training is necessarily the solution for the national

roll-out, and a level of force-specific tailoring might be expected in any form of national-level training to secure buy-in and effective delivery at the force level. A number of suggestions were received from interviewees regarding how this might be achieved, from continuing to use a guidance-based approach to providing a proscriptive manual to creating a set of modules that each independently address key learning goals.[170] Using a modular approach would mean that each module could be deployed independently to avoid overlap where forces have had recent similar training (e.g. on bias, communication skills, or an internally-developed stop and search refresher course).

There is no clear view as to which is the most appropriate approach, as each have a number of potential benefits and drawbacks. For example, using modules would allow forces to determine the most appropriate content for them, but could limit consistency across forces in terms of the message officers are receiving, and create differences between forces in officers' resultant approach to using stop and search powers. Additionally, it should be noted that while two forces in the pilot had unconscious bias training previously in place, and others had some form of stop and search refresher training, in most cases forces opted not to tailor these sessions in any major ways, which suggests the need for local tailoring should not be overstated and many forces may prefer very clear and precise direction. If it has not yet been done, a national stock-taking of relevant training currently in place at forces not involved in the pilot could be considered. Understanding which forces already have relevant training such as effective communication, bias, or stop and search refresher courses on offer, would alert the College to potential areas of overlap. Additionally, any manual or guidance should clearly specify where tailoring of the training is acceptable or encouraged at the local level, and where consistent delivery across all forces is required.

7.4 The training could incorporate further opportunities for developing specific skills and debriefing after exercises

All observed trainers worked to connect the training to day-to-day roles and activities that officers would face, and to employ a participatory rather than didactic training style. However, skills-based activities (such as role-play) were not used extensively which seemed to be out of step with the goals of the Guidance for Trainers. While many of the key areas identified in the learning objectives were covered in accordance with the instructions in the guidance, in most of the observed training sessions there was only limited elaboration on why something was a good or bad/right or wrong approach to stop and search. Moreover, there was little discussion within these sessions of the specific skills officers were expected to develop (and how this can be done). Perhaps the best example of this was the unconscious bias exercise, which was followed 'to the letter' in most pilot forces, but almost never included any discussion of how an officer might then alter his/her thinking or practice to avoid or overcome such bias. A greater focus on interpersonal skills may, therefore, be beneficial in the re-design, supported by more extensive debriefing.

Additionally, the observed sessions included discussion and presentation on learning objectives that were meant to be covered entirely in the pre-read (such as the extent to which a person can be searched in

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[170] For example, one module on unconscious bias, one module on reasonable grounds, one module on procedural justice, one module on adverse effects and so on.

public or how someone may be considered vulnerable). Coverage of areas involving 'assumed knowledge' or items that can be covered outside of the classroom may conceivably be trimmed in future iterations of the training to allow additional classroom time for skills development and debriefing, although this approach would also need to take steps to ensure that preparatory work was done by most or all officers attending the training.

7.5 Trainers should be provided with more comprehensive tools to win 'hearts and minds' and respond to challenges

Most trainers in most observations attempted a 'good faith' interpretation of the trainers' guidance. This meant that they attempted to deliver what they felt the College had intended when developing the pilot, and also to present the pilot and evaluation clearly to officers attending the training. Trainers sought to clearly communicate the purpose of the training, to provide ways to make the training relevant to officers' daily activities, and to recognise the constraints in which officers worked. Furthermore, trainers sought to communicate to officers that there was a problem with the way stop and search powers were being used, and that some form of overall behaviour change was therefore necessary, though the scope of this clearly differed from force to force.

However, trainers were not always able to respond to challenges from officers attending the training, and this seemed to stem at times from limits in their own understanding of the material. In a re-designed manual or guidance, a trainer-specific section of common challenges and responses might be usefully added. This could also include supporting materials on how to frame the training, to ensure that trainers are in a position to provide officers with a clear understanding of the training goals, confidence in their powers, and a recognition of the need to do better. Such additional guidance should also be included in the revised 'train-the-trainers' session planning.

7.6 If the 'fair and effective' definition is retained, trainers will require specific tools to communicate and teach it

During observations of the pilot training, the 'fair and effective' definition appeared to create confusion among officers and trainers, and trainers' responses to challenges from officers were often equivocal or unclear. It was consequently not always clear what approach to conducting stop and search was being advocated by the training, and this raised concerns among officers attending the training about how their use of stop and search may be viewed by supervisors if they followed this guidance. Due in particular to the pilot nature of the intervention, it was also mentioned in some sessions that supervisors may not be fully aware of the new guidance outlined in the training.

It is clear the definition was the result of a consultation process, and that the pilot provided the College and EHRC with an opportunity to examine how the definition would be received by officers. It was also expected that the definition was to be revised for the national roll-out. If the definition is to be re-drafted, the issues of interpretation should be kept in mind as they could serve to undermine the message that the national training intends to provide a coherent approach to improving stop and search encounters. In light of this, the College needs to decide on the role of the definition in future training, how the

definition is revised, and how best to equip trainers to explain it and respond to any challenges, as well as reassure officers attending the training that the training messages are supported and understood throughout the force. As discussed further below, this messaging should also reflect wider messaging within the force and especially among senior and supervisory officers.

7.7 Given the sensitivity of the topic, trainers should be able to establish credibility in the topic to build legitimacy with officers

Both trainers and officers receiving the training recognised the importance of the trainer being able to show real-world experience in the use of stop and search powers or otherwise demonstrate credibility around the topic. While it may be the case that police officers tend generally to prefer being trained by officers than members of police staff, in this case it seems to be a particularly important point that has arisen from a wide range of data sources. Where trainers have relevant experience and can demonstrate it in-class, this may help them establish authority on the topic and ease the process of presenting material that officers may see as being critical of the police. While it will not always be possible to have trainers with relevant experience delivering the training, trainers should where appropriate show they understand the practical realities of conducting stops and searches.

7.8 Officers' acceptance of the training messages could be improved if there were explicit middle- and high-ranking support for the messages within each force

The training as delivered did not in all forces include explicit statements that the training was fully supported by senior management or was aligned with force priorities. Moreover, there were tacit messages in many sessions that brought the training value into question. This manifested in different ways within each force, ranging from explicit statements of scepticism from middle ranking officers in training sessions, to statements by trainers that officers' direct supervisors (i.e. sergeants and inspectors) may not be aware of new guidance, to lack of clarity around the new 'fair and effective' definition, to statements that stop and search practice was not actually a problem at *this* force (even if it was a problem elsewhere).

All of these messages might have served in one way or another to confuse or constrain the idea that officers:

- were expected to take a more considered approach to use of stop and search; and
- would be supported by more senior officers if they followed the new training.

Indeed, as noted above, in certain instances officers within the training expressed concern that even where they had reasonable grounds to conduct a search, they might not be supported by their organisations if the search resulted in a complaint or generated 'bad' statistics (i.e. a higher negative search rate). Conversely, officers also expressed concern that they could fail in their duties by not conducting searches where grounds were less certain.

The training re-design therefore may consider that some officers who will attend the national training may enter the training with relatively low confidence in how they should conduct stop and search. The

pool of officers in the pilot included regular users of stop and search, and even some of these officers expressed a lack of confidence around stop and search.

Rather than enhance a very complex skillset required to undertake these searches and boost officer confidence, training – when framed in certain ways – has the potential to increase anxieties and could lead officers to believe that use of the power was not worth the trouble it might cause. This belief could result in a reduction in overall use of stop and search, which may not be problematic if only searches with weaker grounds are reduced in frequency, but could also result in non-use of the power when it is warranted by a situation. The re-designed training for use in the national roll-out should, therefore, be framed and delivered in way that sets clear expectations, but does not undermine officer confidence.

The implications of this report regarding consistent messaging within a force also imply that specific and separate training for supervisors and potentially senior officers should be developed, and the creation of this training communicated to all officers so that officers can work with confidence that their supervisors will be or are aware of (and hopefully support) any changes to the national approach to stop and search. As noted earlier in the report, such training is in development for the national roll-out, though was not part of the pilot intervention.

7.9 Implementation issues relating to differential standards and inconsistent communication may be less relevant for national roll-out, but bear consideration for future training pilots

Issues identified in this report relating to the differential standards for stop and search practice – whereby trained officers perceived that they may be working at a different standard compared to untrained officers, with attendant complications – may not be particularly relevant in a national roll-out since all officers should be receiving the same training. Similarly, the communication issues relating to the pilot – for example, clarifying whether officers are being singled out for training, as well as whether officers would need to remember the training in future (as the guidance they receive may change post-pilot) would also be less relevant in the national rollout than in the pilot context. Officers in the national roll-out may assume a higher degree of policy stability once the training is approved for all officers, and as all officers will receive the training, there should be no questions about why a specific officer had to take it.

These issues should nonetheless be remembered for future training pilot initiatives, since it is reasonable to expect that they would be repeated under similar conditions – where a training initiative has a clear political undertones (for example, in this case being commissioned by the Home Secretary), where training introduces different (perceived or actual) standards for trained officers, or where officers are aware that the content of training (and thus the standards of practice) may change in the not-too-distant future.

Finally, the process evaluation is unable to comment on whether or not the training had any impact on officer behaviour or attitudes (see Miller and Alexandrou, 2016 for results of the impact evaluation). Nonetheless, given the variability between forces in how the training was communicated and delivered, there is a question as to whether the pilot can be regarded as a single, coherent and consistently implemented intervention. These issues are likely to make it more difficult to attribute any observed changes in outcomes to the intervention, as it differed from force to force. Moreover, given that the

training to be delivered as part of the national roll-out from 2016/17 is to be substantially re-designed, it cannot be assumed that any impacts identified by the impact evaluation will be repeated. This suggests that implementation of re-designed training needs to be evaluated, ideally using some form of controlled design, to determine whether it achieves its desired impacts.

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