

1-1-1999

## United States probation/pretrial officers' concerns about victimization and officer safety training

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UNITED STATES PROBATION/PRETRIAL  
OFFICERS' CONCERNS ABOUT  
VICTIMIZATION AND OFFICER  
SAFETY TRAINING

by

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Bachelor of Science  
University of Nebraska, Kearney  
1985

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the

**Masters of Arts Degree  
Department of Criminal Justice  
Greenspun College of Urban Affairs**

**Graduate College  
University of Nevada, Las Vegas  
May 1999**

**UMI Number: 1394807**

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**Thesis Approval**  
The Graduate College  
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

April 15, 1999

The Thesis prepared by

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Entitled

United States Probation/Pretrial Officers' Concerns About Victimization  
And Officer Safety Training

is approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts in Criminal Justice

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## ABSTRACT

### **United States Probation Officers' Concerns About Victimization and Officer Safety Training**

by

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In June of 1991, the Monograph 109 supervision manual changed the role of the U.S. Probation/Pretrial Officer from predominately that of a social worker to an enforcement agent. Officers now perform enforcement activities and supervise a more dangerous clientele. This shift in responsibilities did not result in increased safety training. Safety issues have become a major concern for many officers.

The current research involved a national survey of U.S. Probation/Pretrial Officers to measure levels of victimization, concerns for personal safety and satisfaction for safety training. The results indicate that few officers were victims of physical assaults but a majority reported being victims of intimidation. The majority of respondents were concerned for their personal safety during field contacts and believed field work has become more dangerous. The research also indicated that scenario training, safety academy training, and defensive tactics training, were all associated with high levels of officer's satisfaction with training.

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This is to acknowledge and thank my thesis chair, Dr. Terance Miethe, who guided me through this project, and to my other committee members, Drs. Richard McCorkle, Kriss Drass, and Fred Preston, for their commitment and passion to education. In addition, thanks is extended to Phillip J. Bigger for his support on behalf of the Federal Probation and Pretrial Officers Association. Lastly, I would like to express my gratitude to Chief United States Probation Officer David F. Sanders, for supporting me in my educational endeavors and ensuring that I was always fully trained to perform my assigned duties in a safe manner.

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

On September 22, 1986 United States Probation Officer Thomas Gahl was shot and killed by Michael Wayne Jackson, an offender under Gahl's supervision. While conducting a routine home visit at Jackson's residence, Gahl was shot as he approached the front door of the home. The mentally disturbed offender chased the wounded officer down the street. The offender caught Gahl and killed him execution style. Co-workers say Gahl was a kind family man who practiced his profession from the social work perspective. Like his fellow officers from the District of Indiana, Gahl was not authorized to carry a firearm (Thorton, 1987). One can only speculate as to whether a firearm and training may have saved Gahl's life. Additional training may have helped him recognize early warning signs and provided him with the tactical knowledge to escape with his life. From 1987 to 1996, 26% of all law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty were killed by offenders who were on parole or probation (Uniform Crime Reports, 1996). Probationers and parolees have proven to be a dangerous population.

Traditionally viewed as social workers, United States Probation/Pretrial Officers have expanded their roles to include many law enforcement activities. One reason for this transformation is the change in clientele now being supervised. Traditionally officers have

supervised a majority of white collar offenders targeted by federal law enforcement agencies. Numerous federal laws enacted since 1984 have changed the type of offenders now being supervised. These new laws included a term of supervision to follow incarceration for almost all offenders sentenced in federal courts. The creation of supervised release increased post incarceration supervision rates by 30 % (Hughes & Henkle, 1997). In addition, the war on drugs has created new laws that have tripled the number of drug offenders now being supervised. There are now more offenders on federal supervision from drug and prison cultures than ever before. This change in clientele has changed the expectations and practices for dealing with federal offenders (Wallace, 1993).

In June of 1991 the Administrative Office of the United States Courts mandated the new expectations for officers with the publication of the enhanced supervision manual known as the Monograph 109. This manual requires that officers perform more enforcement activities on a new and more dangerous offender population. These activities include inspections of offenders' homes, searches, seizures, surveillance, monitoring criminal associations and countless other intrusive activities.

Though intrusive activities have increased with a more dangerous clientele, officers have not been provided with adequate safety training to perform these duties. National studies show probation/pretrial and parole officers have suffered high rates of victimization on the job. The changing roles of U.S. Probation/Pretrial Officers has placed them in dangerous and life threatening situations (Linder & Bonn, 1996).

It would appear obvious that the change in clientele and new enforcement activities would require additional training. However, this has not been the case. There is a long

and ongoing philosophical debate between social work and law enforcement ideology. Those with a social work orientation often oppose the use of enforcement activity. The unfortunate result of this conflict is that the mere mention of safety training is viewed as a guise for law enforcement training. Officer safety training is designed to provide officers the skills and strategies to escape potentially hazardous situations without bodily harm or death. Safety training is not a how-to course for law enforcement activities.

The new enforcement activities prescribed by the Monograph 109 parallel many of the high risk enforcement activities performed by other, more highly trained law enforcement agencies. It would be of great benefit to compare training with other law enforcement agencies that have historically performed the same activities that are now being performed by U.S. Probation/Parole officers. The Nevada State Probation and Parole Department provides extensive officer safety training during its thirteen week academy. This agency has a long history of performing high risk enforcement activities and their experience could be valuable to identify training needs for federal officers.

The result of the philosophical conflict, and the changing roles of U.S. Probation/Pretrial Officers has left administrators in an awkward position. The choice they now have to make is whether to neglect performing intrusive duties or to provide training for their officers. If an administrator chooses not to have their officers perform intrusive duties that they are not trained to do safely, he or she may face a negative review from the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts. An unfavorable review will be reported to the Chief Judge and could result in dismissal or other serious repercussions. The other side of the problem for administrators is that they are often from traditional

social work backgrounds and do not have the knowledge or the staff to provide the necessary training. Therefore, administrators often feel that they subject themselves to liability by providing training when they themselves have limited knowledge of the subject. The Administrative Office for the U.S. Courts has set the standard for supervising federal offenders but have not provided the training to safely perform enforcement activities. Many districts have begun providing safety training for their officers without guidance or funding from the administrative office.

To further explore the extent of the aforementioned debate over training, this research will involve surveying U.S. Probation/Pretrial Officers to evaluate their experiences with regard to the following research questions. First, how many officers are victimized on the job? Second, how concerned are officers about their personal safety, and what is the relationship between attitudes about personal safety and training? Third, how relevant are particular types of safety training to job satisfaction? Fourth, are officers today more likely to view themselves as social workers or law enforcement officers? How does their ideological orientation relate to their victimization experiences, attitudes about safety, and attitudes about safety training? Answers to these questions are directly relevant to improving the job satisfaction of U.S. Probation/Pretrial officers and increasing their on-the-job personal safety with training.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### History of U.S. Probation/Pretrial Officers

Those who have studied criminal justice are familiar with the legendary story of how John Augustus, a prominent shoe cobbler of Boston Massachusetts, began the concept of probation. In 1852, Augustus was recognized for his practice of posting bail for homeless drunkards and aiding them in finding employment and residence. Augustus housed many of the men in his own home. Augustus would make recommendations to the court on the offender's progress. The recommendations were usually followed, saving many men from harsh terms of imprisonment in the House of Corrections. Augustus later began working with other organizations that gave assistance to wayward women and children. Volunteering all his time, Augustus eventually went bankrupt, losing everything he had. John Augustus was the country's first probation officer (Abadinsky, 1982). The first probation law was passed into effect on April 26, 1876 by John Augustus's home state of Massachusetts. Probation is a suspended sentence of incarceration that allows an offender to remain in the community under the supervision of a probation officer in exchange for productive behavior (Evjen, 1997).



The position of United States Probation Officer was created on March 4, 1925, when it was signed into law by President Calvin Coolidge (Evjen, 1997). The position was developed to serve at the pleasure of United States District Court Judges. Their primary responsibilities were to provide assistance to the Court with presentence reports and supervision of federal offenders. Presentence reports inform the court of all pertinent information needed by judges to determine a sentence. The report includes the facts of the crime, prior criminal history, education, employment, substance abuse, family history, and any other necessary information. Supervision requires officers to verify that offenders are fulfilling the conditions ordered by the court, monitoring offenders to insure that they are not involved in any further criminal activity, and providing correctional treatment. The first full-time salaried U.S. Probation Officer was appointed in 1927, and there was little growth until the late 1930's (Evjen, 1997).

In 1930, United States Probation Officers were given the additional responsibility of supervising parolees released from the United States Bureau of Prisons through an amendment to the Parole Act of 1910. Parole is a term of early release from a prison sentence granted for good behavior during incarceration and continued in the community (Evjen, 1997). Parole allows an offender to serve the remainder of a sentence of imprisonment in the community under the supervision of a probation officer. In 1946, United States Probation Officers accepted the supervision of military parolees from the Army and Air Force (Evjen, 1997).

The Comprehensive Crime Control Act of 1984 introduced the sentence of supervised release. Supervised release is a term of supervision that follows incarceration,

but unlike parole, it does not reduce the term of confinement. By 1996, over half of all offenders being supervised were supervised release cases (Hughes & Henkel, 1997).

The responsibilities of U.S. Probation Officers were again added to in 1975 with the birth of federal pretrial services. Pretrial services consist of providing the court with a bail report to determine whether or not the offender is suitable for pretrial release or should be detained until trial. Pretrial services were originally created under the Bail Reform Act of 1966, and later expanded on in the federal system when congress passed the Speedy Trial Act of 1974. In 1975, pretrial services agencies were initially provided to ten different U.S. District Courts across the country as a pilot project. The pilot project was a great success and by the mid 1980s, it was incorporated into all 94 U.S. District Courts. Pretrial services are performed by U.S. Probation Officers in most districts, and others have developed separate pretrial service agencies. Today, 56 districts perform combined Probation and Pretrial services functions, and 37 districts have separate pretrial services agencies. This change resulted in the title of U.S. Probation/Pretrial Officers (Hughes & Henkel, 1997). United States Probation Officers now supervise offenders serving terms of probation, parole, supervised release, and provide pretrial services. United States District Courts receive defendants from all federal law enforcement agencies. These agencies include, but are not limited to, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, Immigration and Naturalization Service, the Internal Revenue Service, the U.S. Secret Service, the National Park Service, the U.S. Customs Service, the Postal Inspector, and Bureau of Indian Affairs. Some local agencies also refer cases to federal authorities

for prosecution. As of 1996, 90,100 federal offenders were supervised by 4,002 United States Probation/Pretrial Officers (Meeker, 1997).

### Changing Roles of U.S. Probation/Pretrial Officers

In 1852, when John Augustus began his probation activities, he would attend court hearings and choose the clientele that he felt could be rehabilitated (Abadinsky, 1982). Today, Probation/Pretrial Officers supervise a very diverse clientele that include a majority of drug cases with extensive criminal histories. There are some explanations for the changing roles of U.S. Probation Officers. The majority of changes in clientele arose from new federal legislation targeting a wider variety of criminals. One significant change was the creation of the sentence of supervised release through the passing of the Comprehensive Crime Control Act of 1984. Almost all offenders sentenced in the federal system have a term of supervision to follow their term of incarceration (U.S. F.C.R., 3583). In 1975, 70% of the cases supervised were probation cases. By 1997 only 40% were probation cases. The creation of supervised release resulted in a 30% shift in the case load. The majority of offenders being supervised today have already spent time in prison and often subscribe to criminal codes, making them more dangerous to supervise (Hughes & Henkle, 1997). In addition, new research shows that the probationers now being supervised commit more serious offenses, have longer criminal histories, and have more severe drug addiction problems (Del Grosso, 1997). The Act of 1984 also included many new criminal firearm laws to be enforced by federal agencies which added to the number of violent offenders on federal supervision (Wallace, 1993).

The Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1986 focused on the apprehension of drug traffickers. The Act included mandatory sentences for the trafficking of certain types of drugs and for certain quantities. The mandatory minimum terms of confinement eliminated a judge's discretion by requiring minimum sentences of five years, ten years, twenty years, or life imprisonment. The Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988 increased the number of federal drug offenses and provided stiffer penalties to the offenses already in existence. This act was most notable for the targeting of crack cocaine. The targeting of crack cocaine resulted in convictions predominately from the street culture of the Black community. Approximately 25% of the yearly court convictions of the U.S. Courts are for crack cocaine, of which 84.4% are Black (U.S. Sentencing Commission, 1997). This was a drastic change in the clientele for U.S. Probation/Pretrial Officers. The act also included the targeting of continuing criminal enterprise drug offenses and offenses involving drug conspiracies. The Violent Crime Control Act of 1994 added the "three strikes and you're out" provision and numerous other new offenses. The 1994 Act also made it possible for courts to impose additional terms of supervised release following a second or third term of incarceration for those offenders whose terms of supervised release were revoked (Wallace, 1993).

It is clear that the changes in legislation have changed the clientele of offenders now being supervised by U.S. Probation/Pretrial Officers. From 1980 to 1996, the number of drug cases being supervised has tripled (Compendium of Federal Justice Statistics, 1996). Almost half of all drug offenders sentenced in U.S. Courts have criminal histories that represent at least two or more prior criminal convictions. During the year of

1997, drug, robbery, and firearm offenses comprised over half of all offenders that were convicted in federal courts. This does not take into account that many offenders convicted in the non-drug or firearm categories often have prior criminal convictions for these types of offenses. Over half of all offenders convicted in U.S. Courts have another pending criminal justice sentence (U.S. Sentencing Commission, 1997).

The new laws have altered the population of federal offenders now being supervised. The majority of offenders being supervised today are drug offenders with extensive criminal histories. These are not the traditional first time white collar offenders traditionally supervised by federal probation and pretrial officers in the past.

#### Changing Responsibilities of U.S. Probation/Pretrial Officers

Paul Brown of the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts noted that the traditional role of US Probation/Pretrial Officers was that of a social worker (Brown, 1994). Accordingly, their education, training, and background was in line with treatment models. Officers were viewed by both the offenders and the community as social workers. Their activities were predominately to provide counseling and act as a broker of referrals to many social service agencies for both the offenders and their families. These referrals often included substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment, employment, welfare, and an endless list of other social services (Brown, 1994).

The aforementioned shift in clientele has changed expectations of U.S. Probation/Pretrial Officers. Today, officers balance both the roles of a social worker and a law enforcement officer. The introduction of the enhanced supervision practices manual,

Supervision Of Federal Offenders Monograph 109 published in June of 1991, was based on the control and enforcement model. This manual clearly marks the change in philosophy and practices of U.S. Probation/Pretrial Officers. Monograph 109 states that probation officers are agents who execute the sentences of the courts. The duties of officers are summarized into three categories: (1) enforcement of the conditions of supervision, (2) risk control, and (3) correctional treatment (Matsch, 1991). New activities performed by probation officers include home inspections, searches, seizures, surveillance, monitoring criminal associations, home confinement and arrests. These practices parallel many of the high risk activities performed by other, more highly trained local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies. These other agencies have experienced histories of assaults and the deaths of their officers in the performance of high risk duties. Due to the new enforcement activities prescribed in the Monograph 109, many federal offenders and the communities in which they live now perceive officers to be law enforcement agents. This perception places inadequately trained officers at the risk of resistance and violent retaliation (Brown, 1994).

One of the primary activities of federal probation/pretrial officers is the home visit. Historically, this practice was known as the "friendly visitor." This was a carry-over tradition utilized by 19<sup>th</sup> century charitable social service workers to teach social skills to the under-class (Linder & Bonn, 1996). Today, the activity is referred to as a home inspection as prescribed by the Monograph 109. It is expected that officers perform a thorough visual inspection of the entire home during each visit, in addition to reviewing the offender's treatment progress. The purpose of the home inspection is to verify

compliance with the law, monitor court ordered conditions, and provide risk control for the community (Monograph 109, 1991).

During home inspections officers may seize contraband observed in plain view. Officers can seize any contraband that is evidence of new criminal activity or violations of the conditions of supervision. The presence of contraband (for example, drugs or weapons) may make it necessary for officers to conduct a further search of the residence. A search may be conducted by more than one officer, or a team of officers that may include the assistance of additional law enforcement agencies (Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, 1991).

Monograph 109 asks that officers monitor offenders suspected of criminal associations by making inquiries about the identity of unknown associates, taking license plate numbers, or setting up surveillance of the offender. Officers often find themselves conducting investigations to follow up on evidence of new criminal activity discovered during the course of their routine duties (Linder & Bonn, 1996). Chief United States Probation Officer David Sanders, District of Nevada, acknowledged that the profile of today's federal offender adds to the challenge of supervision. He pointed out that the new activities have always been the responsibility of federal probation officers mandated by law. Monograph 109 was the first manual to specifically illustrate the appropriate supervision activities.

These activities are not those of the aforementioned "friendly visitor." There has been a clear transition in the role of probation/pretrial officers from social workers to law enforcement agents. The monitoring of federal offenders for new criminal activity

threatens an offender's freedom. This creates a higher likelihood that officers will be met with resistance (Linder & Bonn, 1996). These activities increase the chance that an offender may be contacted while under the influence of drugs or alcohol in high crime areas, thereby increasing the risk from both the offender and third parties (Linder & Bonn, 1996). The enforcement activities performed by probation/pretrial officers poses a threat to the many offenders who are in possession of firearms and would go to extremes to resist any perceived threats against their freedom (Del Grosso, 1997).

### Conflicts Between Social Work and Law Enforcement

For years there has been heated debate over what the role of probation and parole officers should be. Many feel that officers should be an offenders best friend and that the primary goal is rehabilitation. Others believe that protection of the community should be the utmost priority of officers. Sanders contends that officers today face the difficult challenge of managing risk to the public and providing correctional treatment with a more difficult clientele than in the past.

The most profound problem that has developed out of this philosophical conflict is that the clientele and responsibilities of officers has changed, while the training of U.S. Probation/Pretrial Officers has not. Often, the mention of officer safety training is considered to be a guise for law enforcement training, offending those from the social work school. Some experts contend that officer safety training has nothing to do with ones philosophy about what the primary role of officers should be. Safety training is



merely to provide officers with a practical plan to survive an incident that poses the threat of serious bodily harm or death during the normal course of their duties (Kipp, 1996).

One of the most heated arguments of the advocates for social work is that if officers carry weapons, it will create the perception that they are there to enforce the law. The changed perceptions of officers by the offenders and the community will create barriers that hinder the effectiveness of officers to establish rapports that are necessary to foster rehabilitation (DelGrosso, 1997).

Another philosophical argument against arming probation officers is that the presence of a weapon is more likely to cause violence than deter it. Many believe that officers being armed will increase the tensions between officers and offenders due to the increased threat of force. The threat of force may escalate the non-violent offender as well as the already violent offender (DelGrosso, 1997).

Many agency administrators take a strong stand against authorizing their officers to carry a firearm, chemical repellents such as mace or pepper spray, or impact weapons such as a collapsible baton. The rational behind this is that if an officer accidentally or intentionally injures someone unjustifiably, then the agency or administrator is civilly liable for injuries or damages that occur. The problem with the paranoia of civil liability is that when laws are passed requiring probation and parole officers to perform law enforcement responsibilities, the administrator is now liable for providing training and equipment that insures the safety of the employee (DelGrosso, 1997).

In reality, the conflict is between administrators who are social work advocates and the new laws and policies that mandate enforcement responsibilities for the

supervision of more dangerous offenders. Officers are caught in the middle without the training and equipment they need to protect themselves in situations that could result in serious bodily harm or death. The trends in new legislation and changes in clientele are going to force administrators to reconsider their resistance to providing officers with self defense training and equipment (DelGrosso 1997).

### Victimization of Probation/Pretrial Officers

The clientele and responsibilities of U.S. Probation/Pretrial Officers has changed. It would be reasonable to theorize that officers are going to suffer increased rates of victimization. Research conducted by Schweer (1997) provides statistics regarding hazardous duty incidents reported by federal probation and pretrial officers between the years of 1984 to 1996. From 1984 to 1991, an average of 74 hazardous incidents were reported each year. However, from 1992 to 1996, an average of 147 incidents were reported per year. The most striking observation was the increase in hazardous incidents reported since the year 1992. Interestingly, this increase unfolded the year following the implementation of the Monograph 109 supervision manual. There appears to be a relationship between the shift of new supervision practices and increased hazardous incidents reported. The concept of enhanced supervision was obviously a paramount role change for federal probation officers.

Probation officers can expect to have an increased chance of being the target of violence with the change in roles from a social worker to that of a law enforcement agent. A 1988 survey conducted by Parsonage and Bushey concluded that over half of all probation officers have suffered from an assault or hazardous incident during their careers

(DelGrosso, 1997). This information is over ten years old and represents the previous philosophy of probation.

Research on this topic is limited due to the lack of national data geared specifically toward probation officers. However, in one of the most comprehensive studies, Bigger (1993), conducted research regarding assaults against probation officers that occurred between 1980 to 1993. The study excluded threats, intimidation, animal attacks, confrontations, and property damage to ensure that the data focused on incidents that were serious in nature. He solicited responses from 955 agencies listed in the probation and parole directory of the 1992-1994 American Correctional Association and received a 48% response. The results of the study revealed that 2,610 assaults and attempted assaults were committed. The results indicate that there is violent resistance towards probation officers in the performance of their duties.

In 1994, 740 probation officers in the state of Colorado were surveyed regarding victimization. A response rate of 47% was received. Ten percent of the officers responding reported that they had been physically assaulted during their careers. With regard to concerns about being assaulted, 78% were either concerned or very concerned with their personal safety when making field contacts. Nearly 60% percent of the probation officers believed that field work had become more dangerous in the past five years (Gervais-Vess, 1997).

#### Reporting Practices

The victimization of officers is difficult to measure. Many federal districts do not report hazardous incidents to the Administrative Office. Some districts have procedures

for reporting only within their districts. Many officers are discouraged from reporting or are unfairly scrutinized and blamed for the incident. There are a few districts that offer formal counseling or support to victim officers (Lindner & Bonn, 1996).

There is a need for a national reporting repository to collect statistics from all county, state, and federal probation jurisdictions. This would assist administrators in accurately assessing the dangers that probation officers face as well as their training needs. The repository should provide an education program and a format for consistent reporting. There has been a significant amount of statistics, research, and literature devoted to the victimization of police officers. William H. Parsonage, the leading researcher in the field of probation and parole officer victimization, has pointed out that there is no available research regarding this topic prior to 1987. The lack of research concerning victimization of probation and parole officers, and poor reporting practices, have played a significant part in the system's failure to provide adequate standards for officer safety training (Parsonage, 1997).

### Review of Training

The changing role of U.S. Probation/Pretrial Officers has resulted in requests for more self defense equipment and training. In response, some agencies provide officers with additional equipment to appease them, however, many of these agencies have failed to provide the necessary training and judgement skills that should accompany the equipment. Many agencies have provided firearms but offer no intermediate options, such as a baton or physical self defense training. These practices could lead to the excessive

use of lethal force, resulting in unnecessary deaths and lawsuits. Experts have stressed the need for a complete use of a force continuum (Brown, 1994).

A newly hired federal probation officer receives only one week of training from the Federal Judicial Center. The training covers supervision practices and the mechanics of writing presentence reports. Although the training does include some discussion of officer safety, it does not involve any active hands-on training as noted in the new officer orientation curriculum, 1998. New officers receive a 24 hour firearms training course provided by the individual district in which they are employed. The course includes two days of classroom instruction and one day of practical instruction on the firing range. Officers must qualify with an 80% accuracy score which means that they must fire 50 rounds at a man size silhouette scoring 40 hits. The Administrative Office of the United States Courts mandates qualification only once a year. The training provides only a textbook definition for the use of the firearm in a self defense situation (Administrative Office Firearms Training Manual, 1997). For many officers across the country, this is the only tactical training they receive to carry out the use of lethal force. Carrying a firearm without sufficient training is a danger to both the officer and the public. The current training does not involve the study of the early recognition of danger signs for drawing a firearm or escape. Tactical and mental preparation should be taught to officers who visit potentially dangerous offenders and/or work in high crime areas (Brown, 1993). Twenty-four hours of firearms training is not sufficient for the use of lethal force. In addition, a full continuum of non-lethal defense options should be offered to avoid excessive use of lethal force. This would provide an option to officers who are assaulted but are not in a

position that would justify lethal force. Failure to provide adequate training could lead to unnecessary death and associated problems (Brown, 1994).

Many districts around the country have begun implementing their own officer safety training programs due to the lack of safety training provided by the Administrative Office for the U.S. Courts. The training varies from district to district. Some districts provide complete officer safety training academies, others have only defensive tactics classes, while some offer nothing at all. Recently, Chief United States Probation Officer Larry Wiley, District of North Carolina, surveyed the Probation and Pretrial Chiefs of all 94 districts in the country to obtain their opinions about having a national defensive tactics policy. Chief Wiley received 70 responses, well over 50%. Of the 70 surveys returned, 63% were strongly in support of having a National Defensive Tactics Policy. In the comments section a number of Chiefs expressed dissatisfaction with regard to the lack of guidance provided by the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts (Wiley, 1998).

In comparing the training currently being provided by some districts around the country, the District of Nevada provides a one-week, 40-hour officer safety training academy in addition to the standard 24-hour firearm qualification course. The program was adopted from the Eastern District of California in 1993 and is mandatory for all officers in the district. The same academy has been implemented by 12 different districts around the country. The academy includes participation in live scenarios, use of an electronic firearms simulator, live fire action course, and physical defensive tactics. Throughout the entire course, officers are taught to recognize early warning signs for danger and the use of a tactical plan to defend themselves and escape, minimizing the

chances of serious bodily harm or death. Many districts that do not have an academy send their officers to districts that do. To date, the District of Nevada has trained 85 officers from 18 different districts around the country and has helped a number of other districts implement their own safety academy (Nevada Training Records, 1999). The districts implementing safety academies have not received any guidance or funding from the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, but have received the Monograph 109 supervision manual with the expectation that dangerous and intrusive activities be performed by U.S. Probation/Pretrial Officers.

In addition to the academy, the District of Nevada has provided additional equipment and training including bullet proof vests, collapsible batons (8 hours training), and specialized search training (8 hours), provided by instructors from the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department. If an officer participated in all of the training offered it would total only 76 hours. Compared to other districts that offer only 24 hours for firearms and 4 hours for pepper spray, 76 hours is significant. The District of Nevada's training program is superior to the training offered by many districts around the country. However, both standards are inferior to other law enforcement agencies performing similar types of enforcement activities. Probation officers employed by the State of Nevada Department of Parole and Probation receive 13 weeks of training at the Peace Officer Standards and Training Academy, which includes a total of 200 hours of tactical officer safety training according to Instructor Russle Ellis. Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation attend an 18 week academy per Special Agent Williams, while officers of the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police also attend a 18 week academy. Both receive

additional on-the-job training and supervision from training officers on the streets once they arrive at their assigned posts. They receive significantly more safety training than probation officers but their jobs are parallel as they are dealing with the same clientele and similar enforcement activities.

### Violence In The Context of Social Control

U.S. Probation/Pretrial Officers now supervise many offenders from street and drug subcultures. Some of these are very organized, some are loosely organized, and most are not organized at all. Most of these subcultures share common rules of the street and have their own black market economy. The rules of the street and goods sold in the black market are usually in conflict with the laws of the state and government. The enforcement activities now performed by U.S. Probation/Pretrial Officers will result in a change of perceptions by both the offenders and the public. Officers will now be seen as agents of social control rather than social workers. The prescribed enforcement activities of officers invade the offender's privacy and increase the possibility that officers will discover new criminal activity threatening the freedom of the offender. Threatening the freedom of offenders, and the intrusions into their lives, increases the likelihood for resistance as well as the likelihood that an officer will encounter a violent response(Casillas, 1994).

Criminologists and sociologists have illustrated that violence is often the result of anger and frustration brought about by not having a role in society, or being deprived of the benefits shared by other members of society. Offenders often have membership in



subcultures that place value in resistance toward agents that represent social control.

More often than not, subculture rules promote violent resistance and outward attacks directed at agents of social control. A portion of this literature review will be devoted to understanding violence in the macro social context.

To examine violence, it should be acknowledged that both acceptable and unacceptable violence exist. Violence is a word often used to describe aggressive acts that are not in line with mainstream societies perception of what is right. Americans consider certain acts of violence to be justifiable (Palmer, 1972). The fundamental difference between acceptable and unacceptable is determined by who is in control of the violence. If violence leads to liberation from oppressors, then the violence is considered acceptable. If it does not lead to liberation from oppressors, then it constitutes a criminal act that will be punished by those who maintain control. When an individual resists control with violence against those in power, the act is unacceptable. When those in power use violence for control, the act is considered acceptable (Palmer, 1972).

To understand the underlying forces of violence in a social context, social structure must be examined. Societies are defined as a group of people sharing a common ground who form a co-operative and institutions. In a society, each member has a role from which they expect a share of the over-all profit determined in accordance with their role. Societies form rules and appoint authorities to enforce those rules and settle disputes. Members of society that are deprived of a role in society suffer dissatisfaction that manifests frustration and desperation. Individuals may become overwhelmed, desperate, and angry, feeling trapped by the force of the social structure. Their perceptions of

hopelessness lead them to believe that they have no viable solution. Ultimately, this leads to aggression and violence against others, the social system, or themselves (Palermo, 1994).

Agents of social control are used to contain individuals or groups that resist mainstream society's laws. When force is applied to suppress a situation, tensions can escalate and result in heightened aggression and violence (Palmer, 1972). This is the tip of the iceberg when you consider the individual's sense of deprivation and desperation. Some sociologists feel that violence is the result of the manifestation of deprivation. Others focus on violence as a normal part of subcultures (Palermo, 1994), or contend that violence is shared and learned among subcultures (Williams & McShane, 1994).

For decades, subcultures have been a primary topic for criminologists and sociologists who contend that the phenomenon fits into many of the current and traditional social theories of crime. Individuals who are deprived often find themselves to be in the same economic and geographic group. The vast majority of subcultures evolve from among the poor and minority populations. A common bond arises and a subculture is created much the same way as mainstream society. Subcultures meet the needs of individuals who are excluded by mainstream society. Their economic system is often based on illegal activities and they use violence to enforce their rules. Subcultures represent groups that are often targeted, arrested, and incarcerated by the criminal justice system (Williams & McShane, 1994).

While certain subcultures are organized like mainstream society, a majority of them are not. Organized groups, like La Cosa Nostra (LCN), drug cartels, biker gangs, and

political or religious cults, spring up within subcultures (Casillas, 1994). Most subcultures, like street gangs, rarely hold organized meetings to determine the “law of the street.” The “law of the street” serves those in subcultures somewhat like the police serve the upper and middle class. In a subculture, it is acceptable to use violence in retaliation when someone violates a member, a member’s family, or a member’s property. For upper and middle class society, this service is provided by the police. Society as a whole does not recognize the subculture’s laws, and a conflict is thereby created (Williams & McShane, 1994).

La Cosa Nostra, also called the Mafia, has its own set of rules and its own economy. The LCN uses force and violence to conduct business or punish violators. LCN has rules against killing law enforcement agents because it often hurts their traditional business ventures. There are times when the LCN makes exception to the rule if it is necessary for the survival of their business, organization, or the officer is under their employment and has wronged them. A law enforcement officer may be killed if it occurs spontaneously, as when members are caught in the commission of a criminal act (Casillas, 1994).

Street Gangs illustrate their attitudes and beliefs through “gangster rap.” These songs advocate the ambush and killing of police officers and federal agents. These records have sky rocketed in sales to gold and platinum in weeks. Many of the lyrics defy social values and laws by encouraging sexual violence, drug use, trafficking, and murder. “Gangster rap” has been described as the anthem of disenfranchised, Black, inner-city youth which is intended to remind mainstream America of the anger and frustration

brought about by their being the abandoned. The music is revolutionary in nature for it boasts of a sense of pride in the inner-city criminal activity that has become the street gangs' way of life (Stalworth, 1994).

Many Biker gangs often sport their one percent logo patches. This patch represents the motto that they are the one percent who will not conform to society's rules and norms. They are anti-social in nature and big subscribers to the drug subculture. Illegal activity, such as drug manufacturing/trafficking, burglary, theft, and murder for hire, are preferred professions. They often collect badges of police officers killed or assaulted as status symbols of their anti-establishment pact (Casillas, 1994).

Drug cartels have their own laws. Use of violence to settle disputes and protect their business deals is acceptable and the law of their culture. It is acceptable to use violence to avoid apprehension or the loss of their product to law enforcement agents. Economics is the main purpose for the existence of these subcultures (Casillas, 1994). There are many anti-government groups with Timothy McVeigh being one of the most notable members. On April 19, 1995 McVeigh blew up the federal building in Oklahoma City. The building housed the federal court and many federal law enforcement agencies. One hundred sixty eight people were killed and hundreds more were physically and psychologically injured. McVeigh followed the how-to instructions for making a bomb from an anti-government revolutionary handbook (Casillas, 1994).

Religious cults have become very popular in the past two decades. The most recent and notable of these is the Branch Davidians of Waco, Texas. David Koresh, their charismatic leader, led his religious followers into a conflict against government control in

protest of mainstream values. The cult resisted law enforcement officials, killing four agents. The standoff ended after 50 days when 80 cult members committed mass suicide (Casillas, 1994).

The conflicts that arise between agents of social control and the aforementioned segments of society often result in violence, assaults, and death. The Uniform Crime Reports (1995) revealed that substantial violence occurs between law enforcement officials and the community. Fourteen in every one hundred law enforcement officers were assaulted during the year of 1995. Of 8,983 reporting agencies that police 74% of the American population, 56,686 assaults were committed against law enforcement officers during the year of 1995. There were 243 ambush style assaults on officers during the year of 1995. Between the years of 1986 and 1995, 706 officers were killed in the United States. Seventy-four were killed during 1995, fourteen of whom were ambushed. Between 1992 and 1996, law enforcement officers justifiably killed 2,056 people in violent altercations. These numbers point out that there is a great deal of resistance to social control and law enforcement agents (U.C.R., 1995).

The prior discussion notes that individuals suffering from the manifestation of deprivation become angry and desperate. They often lash out with violence toward the social system, directing their aggression at agents of social control. Many of those suffering from deprivation often fall into subcultures. These subcultures often proclaim the value of resisting or attacking law enforcement officers. The declared "war on drugs" is a current message which represents the attitudes of mainstream society toward the drug subculture. Translated, it is a war declared on a subculture and their economy. As noted

by Palmer's research of violence, when resistance is met with force it can escalate into more aggression and violence. For most people the thought of ambushing, assaulting, or killing an officer is inconceivable. From the numbers noted above, it can be concluded that there are many who do not share the same views.

The changes in clientele being supervised by U.S. Probation/Pretrial Officers now include a majority of drug and violent offenders who often live among subcultures. The aforementioned subcultures range from unorganized street gangs to organized anti-government groups. These subcultures were formed to meet the needs of disenfranchised people who share the common needs of those suffering from role deprivation. Officers are now required to enter these neighborhoods and homes to perform activities that intrude on their privacy and threaten their freedom. These new enforcement activities will place officers in a role that will increase the frustration and desperation of many members of the disenfranchised and subcultures. The heightened tensions of the offenders and their communities increases the chances that Probation/Pretrial Officers will be the target of the same violent resistance and retaliation experienced by traditional law enforcement officers. The Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts has failed to explore the role of social control and the violence that results from resistance. Before high risk duties are assigned, they should be reviewed for the potential hazards that can arise from their performance and safety training should be provided accordingly (Lindner & Bonn, 1996).

### The Current Study

The current study is designed to examine the nature of U.S. Probation/Pretrial Officer's experiences with victimization, concerns for on the job personal safety, levels of

satisfaction for training, and how officers orientation relates to these issues. As noted in the literature review, the clientele now being supervised by U.S. Probation/Pretrial Officers has changed drastically. Officers are now expected to perform enforcement activities with a more notably dangerous clientele. The noted problem is that the national changes in clientele and prescribed duties did not include national officer safety training, policies, or standards. Many districts provide substantial training to their officers, while others do not.

There is limited research in the area of victimization and safety for probation and parole officers. Parsonage's (1997) literature review concluded that research on the topic of probation and parole officer victimization and training was non-existent prior to 1987. Both Parsonage's (1997) and Bigger's (1993) research combined numerous jurisdictions of probation and parole officers. To date, there has never been survey research published exclusively directed towards U.S. Probation/Pretrial Officer victimization, their concerns for officer safety, and satisfaction for the safety training they receive. On a number of occasions, the hazardous incident reports submitted to the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts by U.S. Probation/Pretrial Officers have been reviewed for trends. However these statistics represent only the hazardous incidents reported, which as noted earlier, falls prey to inconsistent reporting practices and policies that vary from district to district. The review of these reports does not address officers' concerns for personal safety or perceptions about safety training and equipment currently being provided.

### Research Hypotheses

The following research questions will be examined in this descriptive study. First, how many officers are victimized on the job? Second, how concerned are officers about their personal safety and what is the relationship between attitudes about personal safety and their training? Third, how relevant are particular types of safety training to officers' job satisfaction? Fourth, are officers today more likely to view themselves as social workers or law enforcement officers? How does their ideological orientation relate to their victimization experiences, attitudes about safety, and attitudes about safety training? Answers to these questions are directly relevant to improving the job satisfaction of Probation/Pretrial Officers and increasing their on the job personal safety through training.



## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

A survey was conducted to examine the relationships for the variables identified in this study. The sample and measures of variables are described in detail in the section to follow. On December 1, 1998 the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Office of Sponsored Programs, approved the collection of data from human subjects for this study. Copies of the approval notification, protocol request information, and questionnaire results are included in the appendices.

#### Sampling Procedures

The focus of research is a national survey of the 4,200 United States Probation/Pretrial Officers that serve all 94 Districts of the U.S. Courts. A random sample of 539 officers was drawn from the 4,200 U.S. Probation/Pretrial Officers listed in the national personal directory of the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts. A computerized program was used to randomly select the names from the directory and print the mailing labels.

A mail survey about officer safety issues was sent out during the month of February, 1999. The printing and mailing of the survey was completed by a commercial printing company in New York City. The researcher has never had access or knowledge

of the identities of the subjects surveyed. The survey included a return envelope addressed to the researcher in Las Vegas, Nevada. The instructions requested that the survey be returned within ten days. Responses were accepted for 30 days, until March 8, 1999. The thirty day time period was used due to the fact that the printers mailed the surveys out over a one week period of time, and to allow for mail delivery time differences across the U.S. Of the 539 surveys sent out, 300 were returned for a response rate of 56%.

### Respondent Characteristics

The typical respondent to the survey was a married white male, between the ages of 25 to 60 with an education level of a MS/MA degree. The respondents were typically line officers performing supervision functions in urban areas in the Eastern time zone. Representative comparisons cannot be made between the sample characteristics and the entire population of U.S. Probation/Pretrial Officers due to the fact that the Administrative Office of U.S. Courts does not keep national records of this information. (The entire breakdown of demographic proportions for the sample can be seen in the survey results of the appendices section).

### Coding of Variables

The key variables in this study involve measures of victimization experiences, concern for personal safety, training satisfaction, officer orientation and high risk activities. These measures are summarized below.

Two variables were used to measure victimization experiences. These include (1) the number of times the officer was physically assaulted during their career as a probation/pretrial officer and (2) the number of times the officers experienced intimidation with violence or other means. Each variable ranged in value from 0 to 4 or more times.

There were two different variables used to measure officers concerns for on the job personal safety. One variable represents the officers' level of concern for their personal safety when making field contacts. Response categories are "very concerned", "somewhat concerned", and "not concerned". The other variable required the respondent to rate their belief about the dangers of field work over the past 5 years. Responses for this variable included "more dangerous", "stayed the same", and "become less dangerous".

There were three variables used to measure respondents satisfaction for the safety training they received. The first variable examines whether or not the respondents think that the lack of safety training has a negative effect on job productivity. The second variable asks respondents to rate the training they have received for dealing with altercations and threats of altercations. Responses categories with the involve the choices of excellent, good, fair, or poor. The third variable asks respondents to rate the officer safety training/practices in their district. This variable was recoded to compare persons who were satisfied or dissatisfied with their training.

### Training Types

One of the types of training measured was scenario based training. This training involves role play situations in which participants had to use judgement skills to negotiate

the incident. Another measure of training involves whether a person attended a one week safety training course that included scenarios, defensive tactics, firearms training, and judgement skills. Whether or not a person had hand-to-hand, self defense tactics training was another measure of the type of training. Respondents were asked to check a box for each type of training they received in their districts.

#### Ideological Orientation

Ideological orientation is concerned with whether officers perceive themselves as oriented more toward law enforcement or social work. Respondents answered this question on a scale ranging from 1 (law enforcement) - 10 (social work). The variable was coded so that answers ranging from 1 - 4 represented law enforcement ideology, answers ranging 7 - 10 represent social work ideology, and answers 5 - 6 represent an equal balance of both ideologies.

#### High Risk Activities Performed

Two variables were used to measure respondents that performed high risk activities. These variables include whether or not the probation/pretrial officer performed (1) searches of clients or (2) seizures of illegal contraband.

#### Analysis Plan

The data collected from the survey responses was coded into the SPSS 7.0 statistical analysis program. The first phase of the analysis was to examine frequency distributions to determine the respondents' levels of victimization, concerns for personal safety, and satisfaction for the training currently being provided. The second phase of the

analysis involved comparisons between the levels of victimization, concern, and satisfaction with the types of training provided, ideological orientation (law enforcement vs. social work), and high risk activities performed. Bivariate cross tabulations were utilized for comparing the variables to determine if relationships exist. The cross tabulations were checked for statistical significance by using the Chi-Square statistical test. A significance level of .05 was used to define significant relationships.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

The analysis involved the examination of univariate and bivariate relationships between victimization, concerns for safety, ideological orientation and training. The results are as summarized below. Tables are only presented for bivariate relationships that were found to be statistically significant.

#### Levels of Victimization

The survey results indicate that almost 9% of all respondents were victims of physical assaults during their careers as U.S. Probation/Pretrial Officers. Of the officers physically victimized, over one-third were victimized more than once during their careers. No one reported being victimized four times or more (see survey results appendices ). Bivariate comparisons were made between assaults and the categories of training, ideology, and high risk activities performed. It was expected that training would reduce victimization risks, and that law enforcement ideology and high risk activities would increase it. However, no statistically significant relationships were found between physical assaults and these other variables.

The survey results indicate that over 60% of all respondents were victims of intimidation during their careers as U.S. Probation/Pretrial Officers. Of the victimized officers, nearly one-fifth were intimidated only once, one-fifth were intimidated twice, and a slightly lower proportion were intimidated more frequently ( survey results appendices).

Bivariate comparisons were made between the frequency of intimidation and training, ideology, and high risk activities. No statistically significant relationships were found between these variables.

#### Concerns for Officer Safety

Almost 85% of all respondents were very concerned or somewhat concerned for their personal safety when making field contacts. Three-fourths of the survey respondents indicated that they believe that field work has become more dangerous in the past five years. Almost one-fourth believed that it has stayed the same.

Bivariate comparisons were made to determine if there were any relationships between concerns for officer safety and training, ideological orientation, and high risk duties performed. Again, no statistically significant relationships were observed.

#### Officer Satisfaction for Training and Equipment

The survey results indicated that almost half of all respondents believe that the lack of safety training has a negative effect on their job productivity. When respondents were asked to rate the training they received for dealing with altercations, or threats of altercations, over one-quarter of them rated their training as excellent, nearly half rated

their training as good, and the remaining one-fourth rated their training as fair or poor.

When respondents were asked how satisfied they were with the safety training/practices in their districts approximately two-thirds reported being satisfied.

Bivariate comparisons were made between the different types of training provided to officers and victimization experiences, concerns for safety and training satisfaction ratings. The comparisons revealed statistically significant relationships between scenario training and respondents' beliefs about the dangers of field work, ratings for training in dealing with altercations, and ratings of the training practices in their district.

Table 1 indicates that officers who received scenario training were more likely to view field contacts as becoming more dangerous over the past five years. Some might say that the training increased paranoia, but the main theme of safety training is to heighten awareness for personal safety (Brown 1993). It appears that officers who received scenario training are more conscientious of the dangers that exist around them.

Table 2 examines the relationship between scenario training and respondents' attitudes about the training they received in dealing with altercations or threats of altercations. Respondents who received scenario training were three times as likely to rate their training as excellent as those who did not. Scenario training appears to increase officers attitudes about training and reduce their negative evaluations of the quality of their training.

Respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with the safety training/practices of the districts where they work. As indicated in Table 3, bivariate comparisons reveal that the officers who received scenario training were over 20 points



more likely to report that they were satisfied with their districts' training practices.

Officers who did not have scenario training were more than twice as likely to be dissatisfied with their district's training/practices. These findings suggest that scenario based training will increase officers' awareness for danger, ratings of their training and satisfaction with training practices.

Significant relationships were found between safety academy training and respondents' ratings of their training in dealing with altercations and the ratings of the training/practices in their district. Table 4 shows that the respondents who participated in safety training academies were over three times as likely to rate their training as excellent for dealing with altercations as those who did not have the training. Those that did not have the training were over four times as likely to rate their training in dealing with altercations as poor.

With regard to respondents' satisfaction with their district's safety training/practices, Table 5 indicates that respondents receiving safety academy training were approximately 25% more likely to report being satisfied. Respondents who did not receive the training were about four times as likely to report being dissatisfied with their district's training/practices.

The next type of training examined involves defensive tactics. There were statistically significant relationships between this variable and respondents' satisfaction with training. Table 6 indicates that the respondents who did not have defensive tactics training were about 15% more likely to indicate that the lack of safety training had a

negative effect on their work productivity. This indicates that defensive tactics training can increase job satisfaction and work productivity.

Bivariate comparisons were made between respondents training rating for dealing with altercations and whether the respondents received defensive tactics training. Table 7 indicates that respondents receiving defensive tactics training were about twenty times more likely to rate their training in dealing with altercations or threats of altercations as excellent and twice as likely to rate their training as good compared to those who did not have the training. Those who did not have the training were twice as likely to rate their training as fair and over eight times more likely to rate their training as poor. Defensive tactics training significantly increases respondents' positive ratings of training.

With regard to the relationship between defensive tactics and respondents ratings of the training/practices of their district, Table 8 indicates that respondents who received the training were approximately 45% more likely to report being satisfied with their districts training/practices. Those who did not have the training were approximately four times more likely to report being dissatisfied with their districts training/practices.

Overall, these results indicate that defensive tactic training has had the most profound effect on increasing respondents' training ratings, satisfaction with training practices and reducing their reports of negative effect on work productivity.

### Ideological Orientation

Respondents were asked to identify where they believed the role of officers should lay on a scale of one to ten, with 1 being the extreme for law enforcement orientation and

10 being the extreme for social work orientation. The variable of law enforcement and social work was coded into three groups. The law enforcement side was comprised of 1-4, the middle between both orientations was 5-6, and the social work side of the scale was 7-10. Based on this coding, a total 34% of the respondents fell on the law enforcement side, 49% fell in the middle group between both orientations, and over 15% were located on the social work side. The three categories were compared to the variables that represented victimization, concerns for on the job safety and training satisfaction. No statistically significant relationships were found between these variables.

#### High Risk Activities Performed

High risk activities for officers involve the performance of searches and seizures. Each of these variables were compared with victimization, concerns with on the job safety, and satisfaction with safety training.

Two statistically significant relationships were found. As show in Table 9, a significant relationship exists between the performance of searches and respondents satisfaction with their district's training/practices. Respondents that perform searches were about 13% more likely to report being satisfied with their district's training/practices. Officers that do not perform searches were approximately twice as likely to report being dissatisfied with their district's training/practices.

The comparison between seizures and training/practices indicates that respondents who perform seizures are approximately 25% more likely to report being satisfied with their districts training practices (see Table 10). Respondents that don't do seizures were

over three times more likely to report being dissatisfied with their district's training/practices.

One possible explanation for this relationship is that districts that do searches and seizures provide more training than districts who do not. A second explanation is that some districts neglect the enforcement expectations for supervision of offenders and also neglect training. A third explanation is that some districts may not provide safety training in order to justify not performing high risk enforcement activities to which they are philosophically opposed to. The information currently available does not allow for any further comparisons. However, it is important noted that the survey results indicate that only about 25 % of all respondents reported that their districts perform seizures and 18 % perform searches.

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION

This study revealed that training, ideological orientation, and high risk activities have no statistically significant relationship with victimization or intimidation. With regard to the research question of how many U.S. Probation/Pretrial Officers are victimized on the job, the survey results indicate that almost 9% of all officers have been assaulted during their careers with one-third of the respondents being assaulted on more than one occasion. Over 60 % of all officers have been the victims of intimidation with violence or other means during their careers. More than two-thirds of those being victims report multiple incidents.

The level of assault victimization in this study is somewhat lower than Bigger's national study of combined federal state and local jurisdictions which found that half of all probation officers were assaulted during their careers. Several factors may explain the differences across the studies; First, the drastic differences between the national average and federal officers could be the result of the short duration that enforcement duties have been performed by federal officers. In time continued research may find that the performance of high risk activities will increase victimization but this has not been the case thus far. Second, state probation officers have greater chances of victimization because

they often have double or triple the size of case load as federal officers. State case loads are often made up of a with higher percentages of drug and violent offenders. State officers are often geared strictly toward law enforcement activities and federal officers perform more of a balance of both enforcement and social work activities. Third, the balance of enforcement and social work could also be possible explanation for lowering the rate of victimization for federal officers. Each of these possible explanations will require future research to determine their merit.

With regard to the research question about levels of officer's concerns for on the job personal safety, the survey results indicate that 85% of the officers reported they were concerned for their personal safety when making field contacts, and 75 % believe that field work has become more dangerous in the past five years. The respondents' concern levels were compared to the types of training being provided to determine whether they would reduce officers' concerns or perceptions of danger. There was no type of training which was found to reduce officers' concerns for personal safety or reduce levels of perceived danger.

Scenario based training was actually found to be associated with greater perceptions of danger on the job. This relationship is probably due to the fact that most safety training is geared toward developing a heightened sense of awareness.

Both concern and danger ratings of probation/pretrial officers are very high compared to victimization rates. It is possible that there may be over concern due to the enforcement activities and changes in clientele. This level of concern may diminish in time or could be found to have merit if victimization rates increases. One could be relatively

certain that officers are concerned about being one of the 9 % physically assaulted and do not want to be part of any future increase in victimization that may result from the change in clientele of enforcement activities.

With regard to the research question about the types of training that will increase training satisfaction, the current research indicates that scenario training, safety academy training, and defensive tactics training all increase training ratings. Respondents who received these types of training were significantly more likely to report being satisfied or rate their training as excellent and less likely to report being dissatisfied or rate their training as poor. Respondents who attended a safety academy were three times more likely to rate their training in dealing with altercations and district training practices as excellent. Defensive tactics training appeared to be the most significant in raising ratings for training satisfaction. Respondents that had defensive tactics training were about twenty times more likely to rate their in dealing with altercations as excellent. Defensive tactics training reduced the number of respondents reporting that the lack of safety training had a negative effect on their work productivity. Finally, respondents who had defensive tactics training were over twice likely to report being satisfied with the safety training/practices of their districts and those who did not have the training were four times more likely to report being dissatisfied.

The research identifies the types of training that are prevalent for increasing satisfaction for safety training and job productivity. Officer's high levels of concern for personal safety and increased ratings for these types of training both indicate there is a substantial need for the Administrative Officer of the U.S. Courts to provide nationals

standards and training in this area. The fact that there is a significant number of officers that report that the lack of safety training has a negative effect on their work productivity would further support the need for national standards and training.

This study also posed the question of self perception, whether officers view themselves as social workers or law enforcement officers, and how their ideology relates to victimization and their attitudes about safety training. The survey results indicate that about one-third of the respondents see themselves as law enforcement officers, only about one eighth-view themselves as social workers, and about half see themselves as both. Comparisons between officers' ideological orientation and the other variables indicated no significant relationships. The lack of any significant relationships is important when you consider the ongoing philosophical debate that has hindered officer safety training. The current research indicates that there is no relationship between the law enforcement orientation and the perpetuation of victimization and violence, as believed by social work advocates. This also indicates that those probation/pretrial officers with a law enforcement orientation are not more likely to be assaulted or dissatisfied with training.



## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSIONS

The literature review illustrates the changes that have taken place in the roles of U.S. Probation/Pretrial Officers. The research shows that the clientele has changed drastically from that of the white collar probationers of the past to that of drug offenders with extensive criminal histories. The shift in clientele requires that officers perform more enforcement duties as mandated by the supervision manual, Monograph 109. The literature points out that there is a gap between the new nationally mandated enforcement activities and the safety training being provided. There are two major reasons that officers have not received this training. The first is the philosophical debate between the law enforcement and social work ideological orientations. The second reason is the failure of the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts to provide national officer safety training, policies, and standards.

The literature review and current study both show that Probation/Pretrial Officers face the risk of victimization during their careers. Bigger's national research of combined probation jurisdictions indicates that 50% of all officers were physically assaulted during their careers. The current study showed that only about 9% of U.S. Probation/Pretrial Officers were physically assaulted. There are three possible explanations for this.

First, survey respondents may have under reported their victimizations experiences due to fear of possible repercussions. This explanation is supported by other survey data that revealed many victimized officers were treated as if the incident were their fault or the reporting of incidents is discouraged. Second, the low victimization rate of U.S. Probation/Pretrial Officers could be due to the short duration of time they have been mandated to perform enforcement activities. The national average of officer victimization could be the result on a long history of performing enforcement activities. Third, many districts neglect performing the enforcement activities. The current research shows that approximately 20% of all officers are required to perform searches and 25% perform seizures of contraband. It is very likely that when more officers are expected to perform enforcement activities victimization rates will rise. The rise in victimization will demand that safety training be provided.

The current research shows that a vast majority of officers are concerned for their personal safety while on the job. Different types of training have been shown to be directly relevant to improving levels of satisfaction for safety among U.S. Probation/Pretrial Officers. As observed in the current study, respondents who receive training in defensive tactics, scenario based training, or participated in a safety academy were far more likely to rate their training as excellent and less likely to rate their training as poor. A simple conclusion is that these types of training should be provided to all officers across the board to increase officers' satisfaction with training and overall job satisfaction.

The problem noted earlier is that there are no national safety training standards or policies. Many districts have taken the initiative to provide training that has been rated as excellent by their officers. Other districts have not provided training, the lack of which has resulted in poor ratings by their officers. Whether this is due to a lack of resources or to philosophical conflicts, the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts should provide national training and standards. One of the most astounding findings of this research is that a staggering 91.3% of the respondents believed that the Administrative Office should provide officer safety training at the onset of an officer's employment.

Recently, a U.S. Probation Chief conducted research to determine how other chiefs around the country felt about a national defensive tactics policy, like the one currently being provided by the Administrative Office for firearms. Over 50% of the chiefs responded, and 90% of the respondents were in favor of a national policy for defensive tactics. One would think such results would warrant a response by the Administrative Office, but to date none has been made. This failure is difficult to understand when one considers that defensive tactics are mandated as part of the use of force continuum currently required in the Administrative Office's national firearms policy. The failure to provide this training could result in unnecessary use of lethal force.

The Administrative Office has provided districts with a how-to course for providing officers with scenario based training. The current research indicates that scenario training has been met with great satisfaction. The problem once again is the Administrative Office's failure to institute national policies, standards, or training. Over one third of the officers in the country are dissatisfied with the safety training/practices of

the districts for which they work and a national standard would reduce this. The research also indicates that almost half of the respondents feel that the lack of safety training has a negative effect on their job productivity. The research identifies the types of training that will increase both job satisfaction and productivity.

The current study examined ideological orientation to see what relationship exists between law enforcement and social orientations. The study results showed that there were no statistically significant relationships between victimization, concerns for personal safety on the job, and satisfaction for safety training. These findings are contrary to the arguments offered by supporters of the social work ideology who oppose officer safety training. The social work platform contends that safety training is a guise for law enforcement training and believes that such training and tactics will result in increased violence. This has been found to be false and poor justification for not providing officers with a tactile plan and equipment to escape altercations without serious bodily harm or death. A possible explanation for this lack of relationships is the fact that a vast majority of respondents became probation officers in order to be involved in a helping profession and few are of the pure law enforcement mentality. It is probable that officers only want safety training to avoid injury or death while having to perform intrusive activities with dangerous clientele.

It was expected that officers who are required to perform high risk activities would be more likely to be victimized, have higher rates of concerns for on the job personal safety, and be dissatisfied with the training they are currently being provided. The research revealed that there was no supporting relationships between high risk activities

and victimization, or rates of concern. The relationships that were discovered indicate that officers who perform the high risk activities of searches and seizures are more likely to rate their satisfaction with training as excellent or good and less likely to rate their training as poor. A possible explanation for this is that the officers performing the high risk activities are being provided with training and those neglecting these duties are not being provided training. Reasons why districts may neglect these activities were discussed in detail in the prior section on training.

The major portion of this study was devoted to recognizing that the role of U.S. Probation/Pretrial Officers has changed from that of a social worker to include many enforcement activities. This shift did not include national safety training, policies, or standards that would insure all officers receive adequate training for their on the job personal safety. Many districts around the country have assumed the task of providing safety training to their officers but an unacceptable number of districts have not. The research has identified the types of training that will substantially increase officers' satisfaction for training and job productivity.

The respondents of the survey ranged from chiefs to probation officer assistants, and almost all of them believe that the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts should provide officer safety at the onset on an officer's career. This research has provided descriptive statistics that describe the concerns and dissatisfaction for training that is often spoken among both administrators and line officers in the field. The research has identified both the type of training that will increase levels of satisfaction, and a strong desire for training and support from the Administrative Office.

These findings will be published by the Federal Probation/Pretrial Officers Association and provided to any officer or administrator upon request. The findings will also be submitted to the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts to support a recommendation for officers to receive safety training at the onset on their careers. The recommendation will include a request for a national policy and support for continued officer safety training within each district of the U.S. Courts.

## TABLES

Table 1 Relationship Between Scenario Training and Perceived Danger of Field Work

	<u>Untrained</u>	<u>Trained</u>	<u>Total</u>
More Dangerous	69 68.3%	154 79.0%	223 75.3%
Stayed Same	32 31.7%	41 21.0%	73 24.7%
Total	101 100.0%	195 100.0%	296 100.00

Chi-Square:  $p < .05$ 

Value 4.068

N of Valid Cases 296



Table 2 Relationship Between Scenario Training and Training Rating for Dealing with Altercations

	<u>Untrained</u>	<u>Trained</u>	<u>Total</u>
Excellent	9 8.7%	49 25.1%	58 19.5
Good	39 37.9%	91 46.7%	130 43.6%
Fair	34 33.0%	40 20.5%	74 24.8%
Poor	21 20.4%	15 7.7%	36 12.1%
Total	103 100.0%	195 100.0%	298 100.0%

Chi-Square:  $p < .05$

Value 23.732

N of Valid Cases 298

Table 3 Relationship Between Scenario Training and Satisfaction for District Training/Practices

	<u>Untrained</u>	<u>Trained</u>	<u>Total</u>
Satisfied	59 57.8%	156 80.0%	215 72.4%
Dissatisfied	43 42.2%	39 20.0%	82 27.6%
Total	102 100.0%	195 100.0%	297 100.0%

Chi-Square:  $p < .05$

Value 16.450

N of Valid Cases 297

Table 4 Relationship Between Safety Academy Training and Training Rating for Dealing with Altercations

	<u>Untrained</u>	<u>Trained</u>	<u>Total</u>
Excellent	31 13.0%	27 45.0%	58 19.5%
Good	106 44.5%	24 40.0%	130 43.6%
Fair	67 28.2%	7 11.7%	74 24.8%
Poor	34 14.3%	2 3.3%	36 12.1%
Total	238 100.0%	60 100.0%	298 100.0%

Chi-Square:  $p < .05$

Value 35.400

N of Valid Cases 298

Table 5 Relationship Between Safety Academy Training and Satisfaction for District Training/Practices

	<u>Untrained</u>	<u>Trained</u>	<u>Total</u>
Satisfied	161 67.6%	54 91.5%	215 72.4%
Dissatisfied	77 32.4%	5 8.5%	82 27.6%
Total	238 100.0%	59 100.0%	297 100.0%

Chi-Square:  $p < .05$

Value 13.488

N of Valid Cases 298

Table 6 Relationship Between Defensive Tactics Training and the Lack of Training Effect on Work Productivity

	<u>Untrained</u>	<u>Trained</u>	<u>Total</u>
Negative effect	44 56.4%	91 41.7%	135 45.6%
No effect	34 43.6%	127 58.3%	161 54.4%
Total	78 100.0%	127 58.3%	296 100.0%

Chi-Square:  $p < .05$

Value 4.982

N of Valid Cases 298

Table 7 Relationship Between Defensive Tactics Training and Training Rating for Dealing with Altercations

	<u>Untrained</u>	<u>Trained</u>	<u>Total</u>
Excellent	1 1.3%	57 26.0%	58 19.5%
Good	19 24.1%	111 50.7%	130 43.6%
Fair	32 40.5%	42 19.2%	74 24.8%
Poor	27 34.2%	9 4.1%	36 12.1%
Total	79 100.0%	219 100.0%	298 100.0%

Chi-Square:  $p < .05$

Value 81.813

N of Valid Cases 298

Table 8 Relationship Between Defensive Tactics Training and Satisfaction for District Training/Practices

	<u>Untrained</u>	<u>Trained</u>	<u>Total</u>
Satisfied	31 39.7%	184 84.0%	215 72.4%
Dissatisfied	47 60.3%	35 16.0%	82 27.6%
Total	78 100.0%	219 100.0%	297 100.0%

Chi-Square:  $p < .05$

Value 56.410

N of Valid Cases 297

**Table 9 Relationship Between Districts that Perform Searches and Satisfaction for District Training/Practices**

	<u>No Searches</u>	<u>Searches</u>	<u>Total</u>
Satisfied	170 70.0%	45 83.3%	215 72.4%
Dissatisfied	73 30.0%	9 16.7%	82 27.6%
Total	243 100.0%	54 100.0%	297 100.0%

Chi-Square:  $p < .05$

Value 3.954

N of Valid Cases 297



Table 10 Relationship Between Districts that Perform Seizures and Satisfaction for District Training/Practices

	<u>No Seizures</u>	<u>Seizures</u>	<u>Total</u>
Satisfied	148 66.4%	67 90.5%	215 72.4%
Dissatisfied	75 33.6%	7 9.5%	82 27.6%
Total	223 100.0%	74 100.0%	297 100.0%

Chi-Square:  $p < .05$

Value 16.244

N of Valid Cases 297

## APPENDIX 1



#### **SAFETY ISSUES OF U.S. PROBATION AND PRETRIAL SERVICES OFFICERS**

On the job personal safety has become a growing concern of U.S. Probation and Pretrial Services Officers. Increased safety training has been suggested as a way to reduce the risks of personal victimization. The enclosed survey is designed to obtain your opinions and experiences with dangerous situations on job. This study is being conducted by Kevin D. Lowry, Sr. United States Probation Officer of the District of Nevada, who is a graduate student of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and Chairman of the District Safety Committee. This research is being endorsed by the Federal Probation and Pretrial Officers Association. We would greatly appreciate your assistance on this project by completing the enclosed survey. Participation will take approximately twenty minutes. All responses will remain anonymous and are strictly voluntary.

Please complete the survey within 10 days and return it in the attached envelope. If you have any questions or need additional information about this study, please do not hesitate to contact me at (702) 388-6471, or the University of Nevada Las Vegas Office of Sponsored Programs (702) 895-1357. Thank you for your help with this important project.

**First, a few questions about your personal experiences with physical violence as a U.S. Probation/Pretrial Officer.**

1. During your career as a U.S. Probation/Pretrial Officer, how many times have you been **physically assaulted** in the line of duty?
 

never assaulted	0	.....	270 (90.0%)	(If so, go to question 3)
once	1	.....	16 ( 5.3%)	
twice	2	.....	8 ( 2.7%)	
three times	3	.....	2 ( .7%)	
four times or more	4	.....	0 ( .0%)	
Total			296 (98.7%)	1.3 missing
2. Please indicate the number of times assaulted by each type of assault:  
 \_\_punched \_\_pushed \_\_kicked \_\_choked \_\_burned \_\_cut \_\_shot \_\_held against will  
 \_\_other specify\_\_\_\_\_ Tabulated by hand
3. During your career as a U.S. Probation/Pretrial Officer, how many times has someone attempted to intimidate you with violence or other means?
 

never	0	.....	111 (37.6%)
once	1	.....	54 (18.3%)
twice	2	.....	53 (18.0%)
three times	3	.....	37 (12.5%)
four times or more	4	.....	40 (13.6%)
Total			295 (100%)
4. How do you think officers who have been victimized are treated by management?
 

1. supported	2. as if they messed up	3. just like everyone else
1	2	3
.....	.....	.....
192 (68.8%)	52 (18.9%)	31 (11.3%)
Total ..... 295 (100%)		
5. Does your district have a 'critical incident team' to respond to hazardous events suffered by officers?
 

1. yes	2. no
1	2
.....	.....
100 (36.0%)	178 (64.0%)
6. Which of the following words best describes the common practice for reporting hazardous incidents in your district? (circle all that apply)
 

Mandatory ..... 64.8%	Voluntary ..... 9.7%
Encouraged ..... 40.9%	Discouraged ... 1.3%
Consistent ..... 12.1%	Inconsistent ... 11.1%

**Just a few questions about your concerns for officer safety.**

7. Do you make field contacts ? 1. yes                      2. no                      If no, go to question 9
- 1 ..... 256 (86.5%)
- 2 ..... 40 (13.5%)
- Total ..... 296 (100%)
8. How concerned are you about your personal safety when making field contacts?
1. very concerned      2. somewhat concerned      3. not concerned
- 1 ..... 144 (54.5%)
- 2 ..... 110 (41.7%)
- 3 ..... 10 ( 3.3%)
- Total ..... 264 (100%)
9. Over the past five years, do you believe field work has become
1. more dangerous?    2. stayed about the same?    3. become less dangerous?
- 1 ..... 223 (75.3%)
- 2 ..... 73 (24.7%)
- 3 ..... 4 ( 1.3%)
- Total ..... 300 (100%)

**Next, a few questions about training and equipment.**

10. Do you think the lack of safety training and equipment has a negative effect on your job productivity ?
1. yes                      2. no
- 1 ..... 136 (45.6%)
- 2 ..... 161 (54.4%)
- Total ..... 296 (100%)
11. How would you rate the training you received as a U.S. Probation/Pretrial Officer, in dealing with altercations or threats of altercation?
1. excellent                      2. good                      3. fair                      4. poor
- 1 ..... 58 (19.5%)
- 2 ..... 130 (43.6%)
- 3 ..... 74 (24.8%)
- 4 ..... 36 (12.1%)
- Total ..... 298 (100%)

12. Are officers in your district authorized to carry firearms ? 1. yes 2. no

If no, would you want to be authorized to carry a firearm ? 1. yes 2. no

No analysis.

13. Do you carry a firearm on the job ? 1. yes 2. no

14. What type of training is provided in your district ? (check all that apply)

73.8 self-defense tactics

65.8 judgmental/scenario

20.5 search tactics

30.9 escape tactics

53.7 firearm simulator

20.1 safety academy (one week)

38.6 fitness program

85.2 firearms

26.5 crisis intervention

4.7 suicide prevention

15. Please list any type of training you would request with respect to officer safety.

Tabulated by hand.

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16. What type of equipment is available in your district? (check all that apply)

95.3 capstun

24.2 handcuffs/restraints

4.0 baton

24.5 radio

83.2 firearm

92.3 phone

70.5 protective vest

49.3 flashlight

57.7 personal office duress button

           other                                   

17. Please list any type of equipment you would request and do not already have.

Tabulated by hand.

---



---



---

18. Have you been trained to withdraw or escape from hazardous situations?

1. yes            2. no

1 . . . . . 213 (72.4%)

2 . . . . . 81 (27.6%)

Total . . . . . 294 (100%)

19. Have you been trained for self defense from aggressive animal attacks?

1. yes            2. no

1 . . . . . 109 (37.1%)

2 . . . . . 185 (62.9%)

Total . . . . . 294 (100%)

20. Overall, how satisfied are you with the existing officer safety training/practices in your district?

1. very satisfied    2. satisfied    3. dissatisfied    4. very dissatisfied

1 . . . . . 81 (27.3%)

2 . . . . . 134 (45.1%)

3 . . . . . 62 (20.9%)

4 . . . . . 20 (6.7%)

Total . . . . . 297 (100%)

21. Do you believe the Administrative Office should provide officer safety training at the beginning of employment as a U.S. Probation/Pretrial Officer?

1. yes            2. no

1 . . . . . 274 (92.9%)

2 . . . . . 21 (7.1%)

Total . . . . . 295 (100%)

**Next, a few questions about the duties performed in your district.**

22. Check all of the activities performed in your district on a monthly basis.

24.8 seizure of contraband

18.1 searches

8.3 arrests with a warrant

83.6 home inspections

40.3 surveillance

1.7 arrests without a warrant

23. Does your district encourage the use of teamwork in conducting field contacts?

1. yes            2. no

1 . . . . . 226 (75.8%)

2 . . . . . 72 (24.2%)

Total . . . . . 298 (100%)

24. Do you feel safer in the field when you work with a partner?

1. yes            2. no

1 . . . . . 254 (89.1%)

2 . . . . . 31 (10.9%)

Total . . . . . 285 (100%)

25. Does your district encourage conducting field contacts after the hours 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday - Friday?

1. yes            2. no

1 . . . . . 192 (65.8%)

2 . . . . . 100 (34.2%)

Total . . . . . 292 (100%)



26. On a scale of 1 to 10, where do you believe the primary role of United States Probation/Pretrial Officers should fall?

Law enforcement 1 ---2---3---4---5---6---7---8---9---10 Social Work

1) 1-4      2) 5-5      3) 7-10

1 ..... 101 (34.2%)

2 ..... 148 (50.2%)

3 ..... 46 (15.6%)

Total ..... 295 (100%)

**Finally, a few questions about yourself.**

27. Are you male or female?

1. MALE

2. FEMALE

1 ..... 176 (59.3%)

2 ..... 121 (40.7%)

Total ..... 297 (100%)

28. What year were you born? 19\_\_\_\_

(Age coding) 1) 25-35      2) 36-45      3) 46-60

1 ..... 77 (26.1%)

2 ..... 137 (46.4%)

3 ..... 81 (27.5%)

Total ..... 295 (100%)

29. What is your race or ethnicity?

76.2 CAUCASIAN    10.1 AFRICAN AMERICAN    8.7 HISPANIC

.3 NATIVE AMERICAN    .7 ASIAN    OTHER \_\_\_\_\_ 4.0

Total ..... (100%)

30. How long have you been a U.S. Probation/Pretrial Officer? \_\_\_\_\_ years

1) 0-5   2) 6-10   3) 10-20   4) 20-30

1 ..... 73 (24.5%)

2 ..... 112 (37.7%)

3 ..... 62 (20.9%)

4 ..... 50 (16.8%)

Total ..... 297 (100%)

31. What is the current number of officers in your district? No analysis.

32. Circle each level of education completed (or in the process of completing) and write the field of study below each.

1 AA

2 BA/BS

3 MA/MS

4 JD

5 PHD

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

1 ..... 0 (0%)

2 ..... 118 (40.1%)

3 ..... 163 (55.4%)

4 ..... 12 (4.1%)

5 ..... 1 (0.3%)

Total ..... 294 (100%)

33. How many years have you worked in the Criminal Justice field? No analysis.

## 34. What is your marital status?

- |                         |              |
|-------------------------|--------------|
| 1 single, never married | 2 divorced   |
| 3 married               | 4 widowed    |
| 5 separated             | 6 cohabiting |

1 ..... 44 (14.9%)

2 ..... 24 (8.1%)

3 ..... 221 (74.9%)

4 ..... 2 (0.7%)

5 ..... 1 (0.3%)

6 ..... 3 (1.0%)

Total ..... 295 (100%)

## 35. Which of the following best describes your current job function.

- |                        |                              |                            |
|------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1) Supervision Officer | 2) Pre-sentence Investigator | 3) Supervision/Presentence |
| 4) Pretrial Services   | 5) All of the above          |                            |

1 ..... 126 (42.3%)

2 ..... 53 (17.8%)

3 ..... 50 (16.8%)

4 ..... 48 (16.1%)

5 ..... 21 (7.0%)

Total ..... 298 (100%)

36. What is your title?

1) CUSPO 2) DCUSPO 3) SUSPO 4) SR.USPO 5) USPO 6) POA

1 . . . . .	24 (8.2%)
2 . . . . .	15 (5.1%)
3 . . . . .	48 (16.3%)
4 . . . . .	62 (21.1%)
5 . . . . .	140 (47.6%)
6 . . . . .	5 (1.7%)
Total . . . . .	294 (100%)

37. In what type of area is your office located?

1) rural 2) urban 3)suburban Combined 4) Missing values

1 . . . . .	26 (8.8%)
2 . . . . .	233 (78.5%)
3 . . . . .	23 (7.7%)
4 . . . . .	15 (5.1%)
Total . . . . .	297 (100%)

38. In what time zone do you live?

1) Eastern 2) Central 3) Mountain 4)Pacific 5) Missing values

1 . . . . .	132 (45.1%)
2 . . . . .	99 (33.8%)
3 . . . . .	19 (6.5%)
4 . . . . .	43 (14.7%)
Total . . . . .	293 (100%)

**This concludes the survey. Please return the questionnaire in the attached envelope. Thank you again for your help with this project. Please feel free to use the space below for any additional comments you would like to make about officer safety or training issues.**

## APPENDIX 2



DATE: December 1, 1993

TO: Kevin Lowry (CRJ-5009)

FROM: *W. E. Schulze*  
 W. E. Schulze, Director  
 Office of Sponsored Programs (X1357)

RE: Status of Human Subject Protocol Entitled:  
 "U.S. Probation and Pretrial Officer Safety"

OSP #383s1298-150a

The protocol for the project referenced above has been reviewed by the Office of Sponsored Programs and it has been determined that it meets the criteria for exemption from full review by the UNLV human subjects Institutional Review Board. This protocol is approved for a period of one year from the date of this notification and work on the project may proceed.

Should the use of human subjects described in this protocol continue beyond a year from the date of this notification, it will be necessary to request an extension.

If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact Varsa Green in the Office of Sponsored Programs at 895-1357.

cc: T. Miethe (CRJ-5009)  
 CSP File

Office of Sponsored Programs  
 4505 Maryland Parkway • Box 451037 • Las Vegas, Nevada 89154-1037  
 (702) 895-1357 • FAX (702) 895-4242

## APPENDIX 3

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED STUDY  
U.S. PROBATION AND PRETRIAL OFFICER SAFETY  
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR  
KEVIN D. LOWRY  
DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

1. SUBJECTS:

Subjects for this study will be both male and female, United States Probation and Pretrial Officers, randomly selected from the national personnel directory for the Administrative Office of the United States Courts. Six hundred of the 4,200 officers listed in the directory will be selected. The directory consists of 94 districts, which service all of the United States and provide under the jurisdiction of the U.S. government. Participants will be asked to complete a 38 question survey.

2. PURPOSE, METHODS, PROCEDURES:

**Purpose** The role of U.S. Probation and Pretrial Officer has changed from predominately that of a social worker to an enforcement agent. This shift did not include adequate officer safety training for the performance of enforcement activities. The purpose of this research is to assess levels of officer victimization, their concerns about personal safety, and the training they receive.

**METHODS AND PROCEDURES**

- The research will involve selecting a random sample of 600 officers from the 4,200 United States Probation and Pretrial Officers listed in the personnel directory of the Administrative Office for the U.S. Courts. Every seventh officer in the directory will be surveyed.
- Participants will be asked to complete a 38 question survey sent by mail. The survey should take approximately 20 minutes to complete. The questionnaire will include a postage paid envelope addressed to the United States Probation Office for the District of Nevada, Las Vegas.
- If after 30 days, a fifty percent response rate has not been received, a second wave of questionnaires will be sent out.
- Upon receipt the completed questionnaires will be stored in a safe by the principal investigator until the completion deadline. No personal identifiers are included on the survey so all responses will remain anonymous.



- The responses will then be coded into a computer program spread sheet for analysis. Upon completion of the coding process, the questionnaires will be destroyed.

### 3. RISKS:

The risks to subjects will be minimized as a result of all responses being submitted through anonymous unmarked questionnaires. There will be no way of linking the identity of the respondent to the questionnaire. Once tabulated the questionnaires will be destroyed. The survey will include a statement informing the human subjects that their participation is totally voluntary.

### 4. BENEFITS:

The research will contribute to the limited amount of information that currently exists about levels of officer victimization, concerns about officer safety, and satisfaction with present training. If significant levels of the aforementioned categories are revealed, the findings will be used for recommend changes in the current training practices of United States Probation and Pretrial Officers. Changes in training practices could benefit officers by minimizing the risk of victimization in the daily performance of potentially hazardous duties.

### 5. RISK-BENEFIT RATIO:

There is no known negligible risk to any of the respondents who participate in the study. As noted above, there may be substantial benefit to participants in terms of increasing officer safety training.

### 6. COSTS TO SUBJECTS:

Other than the time it takes to complete the survey, there is no cost to the officers who participate in the study.

### 7. INFORMED CONSENT:

The survey will be conducted on a voluntary basis. Each participant surveyed may elect to complete, or not complete the questionnaire, and return it. The questionnaire instructions will fully appraise the participants of the intended purpose of the research.

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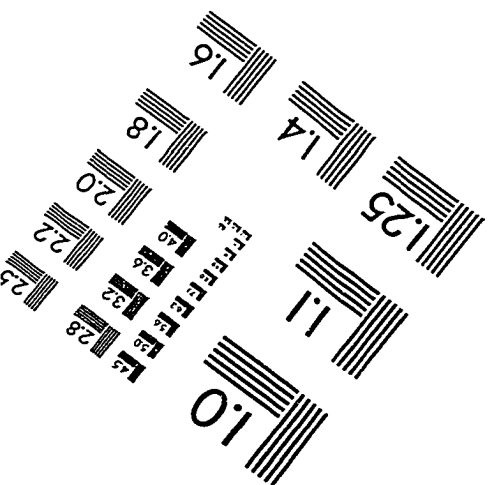
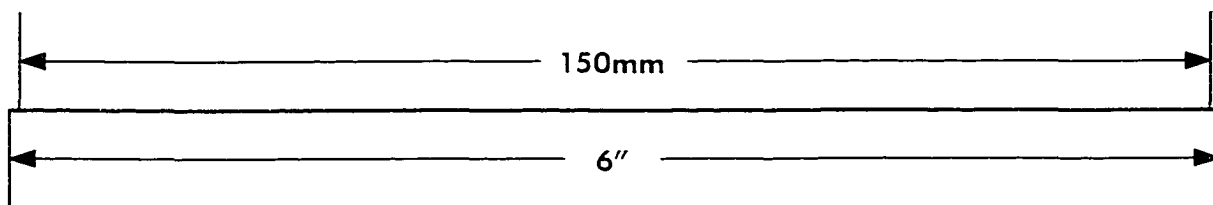
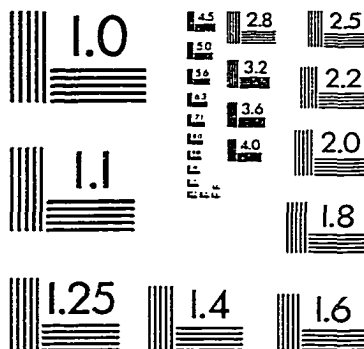
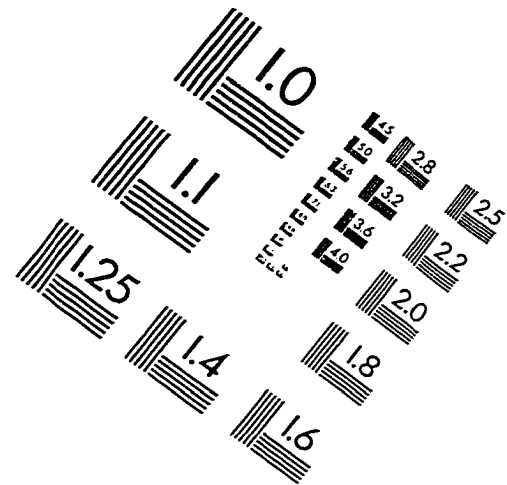
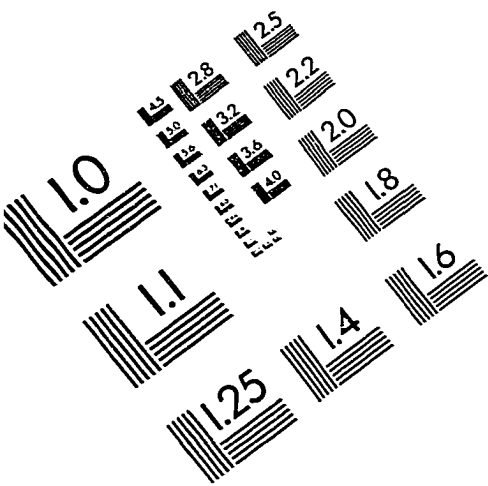
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