

MEMORANDUM TO: All Chiefs of Police and
Commissioner Thomas Carrique
Chairs, Police Services Boards

FROM: Ken Weatherill
A/Assistant Deputy Minister
Public Safety Division

SUBJECT: 2023 Ontario Public-Police Interactions Training Aid

DATE OF ISSUE:	July 7, 2023
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I am pleased to advise that the 2023 Ontario Public-Police Interactions Training Aid has been approved by the Ministry of the Solicitor General to replace the 2004 Ontario Use of Force Model.

In 2017, the ministry established an Executive Technical Table (ETT) alongside research teams to aid the ministry in responding to past Coroner's inquests and, more recently, the recommendations made by the Ombudsman of Ontario in its *A Matter of Life and Death* (2016) report. Recommendation #3 in the Ombudsman's report specifically advised the ministry to "institute a new use of force model that is easy to understand and clearly identifies de-escalation options, rather than just use of force options."

Building on research and the work of the ETT, a subgroup of Use of Force subject matter experts reviewed existing models, inquests, reports, and scholarly literature to develop a revised framework document and graphic to modernize the Use of Force Model. These revisions refocus the Model's outcome from one centred on use of force to one that places emphasis on cooperative police-public interactions underpinned by de-escalation strategies and a procedural justice mindset.

Highlights of the new Training Aid (**Appendix A**) include:

- An emphasis on conflict prevention and de-escalation strategies and their critical role in the "assess, plan, act" process;
- Use of updated terminology;

- The addition of “subject” in the centre of the graphic to signal equal consideration of the “subject” and “situation” elements, and include a subject’s mental/emotional state;
- Changes to the orientation, size, and location of graphical elements to either de-emphasize or emphasize various elements;
- Inclusion of guiding principles of the Training Aid; and
- A directional arrow within the conflict prevention and de-escalation ring to illustrate the assortment of options available to prevent/de-escalate behaviours and/or force.

The new Training Aid was incorporated into the Ontario Police College’s (OPC’s) Use of Force Trainers Course and Basic Constable Training program in April 2023. The OPC will be sharing updated training materials with police services during all upcoming Use of Force Trainer courses to assist with in-service requalification. Additionally, the OPC will be holding workshops with existing Use of Force Trainers to provide them the updated training materials. Workshops will begin in mid-July and will continue through to September.

I would like to thank all of the police services that provided feedback on the model and for the hard work undertaken by the ETT and the OPC’s De-escalation and Use of Force Communities of Practice in the development of the new Training Aid.

For further information, please review the attached framework document and Training Aid graphic. If you have any questions regarding these materials, please contact Michael Barnhart, OPC Deputy Director, by email at Michael.Barnhart@ontario.ca.

Sincerely,

K. Weatherill

Ken Weatherill
A/Assistant Deputy Minister
Public Safety Division

Attachment

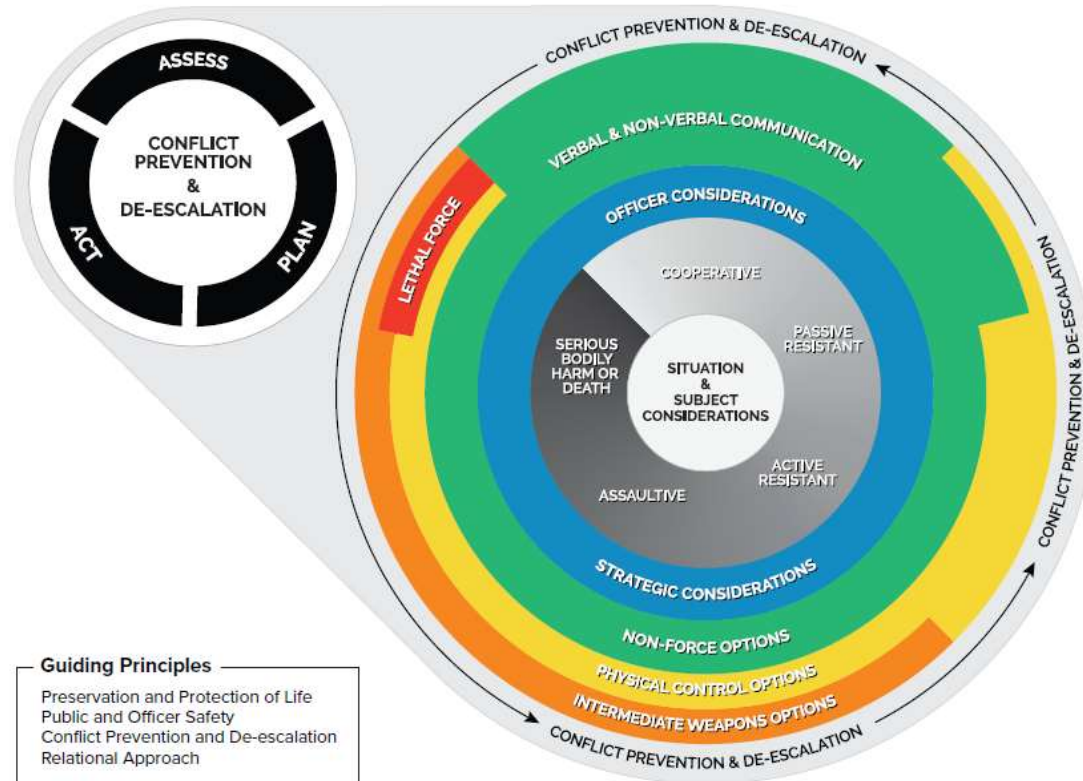
c: Mario Di Tommaso, O.O.M.
Deputy Solicitor General, Community Safety

Creed Atkinson
Chief of Staff, Ministry of the Solicitor General

Appendix A - Ontario Public-Police Interactions Training Aid (2023)

Conflict Prevention
The pre-emptive use of verbal and non-verbal strategies with people in situations with a potential to escalate (speeding ticket, neighbour dispute)
De-escalation
The use of verbal and non-verbal strategies intended to prevent conflict or reduce the intensity of a situation without the application of force and, if force is necessary, reducing the amount of force if viable
Assess-Plan-Act
A cognitive process applied by the officer to circumstances related to the subject/situation and impacted by perceived/actual risk, available time, and resources. This process is continuous, allowing for reassessment based on changing information.
Situation & Subject Considerations
Some factors impacting an officer's perception and decision-making of the subject and situation are: weather conditions, indoors/outdoors, number of officers/subjects, perceived subject ability (cognitive ability, skill, size, weapon), cultural awareness, gender identity.
Subject Behaviors
Cooperative: Subject complies with a lawful request
Passive Resistant: Subject refuses a lawful request, verbally and/or physically by standing still, sitting, laying down
Active Resistant: Subject pulling/pushing away, walking away, running away
Assaultive: Threatens/attempts/strikes the officer, kick, punch, spit, headbutt (no weapon)
Serious Bodily Harm or Death: The use of any weapon or technique reasonably likely to cause serious bodily harm or death

Ontario Public-Police Interactions Training Aid (2023)



The officer continuously assesses the interactions and selects the most reasonable option(s) relative to the subject and circumstances given available resources and time.

Officer & Strategic Considerations

Factors impacting perception and decision-making, including ICEN, ICLEAR, NRA, POL personal experience, skills/ability, stress, injuries, specialty units, available time

Verbal & Non-Verbal Communication

First Contact Approach: Hello, my name is
Relational Approach: I can see you are struggling, I'm here to help you.
Directive Approach: Police, don't move!
Consistent Verbal/Non-Verbal Approach: facial and body expressions consistent with message, applies to both subject and officer

Non-Force Options

Increasing available time to delay/eliminate the need for force may be done using:
 Distance, Physical Presence, Isolation, Containment, Evacuation, Cover, Concealment, Reposition, Teamwork, Disengagement

Physical Control Options

Soft: controlling an arm/wrist, pressure points, barrier assist
Hard: strikes/grounding techniques

Intermediate Weapons Options

Pepper Spray, Expandable Baton, Conducted Energy Weapon, Less Lethal Shotgun, ARWEN, Shields, Canine, Horses, any other approved weapon

Lethal Force

Use of any weapon/technique reasonably likely to cause serious bodily harm or death

This Training Aid is not prescriptive and does not replace the law. An officer's actions must be lawful, necessary, reasonable and proportional.