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Newsletter of the Canadian Police Knowledge Network

The leading edge of online police training. Vol. 6 No. 1 Winter/Spring 2012

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Getting the Upper Hand on Staged Collisions: A New Online Training Initiative

A partnership between York Regional Police, Insurance Bureau of Canada, and the Canadian Police Knowledge Network is improving the ability of frontline officers to identify and investigate suspected cases of staged collisions.

Until recently, auto insurance fraud has been flying under the radar of most Canadians. But the success of recent investigations like Project Whiplash and Project 92 have garnered a lot of media attention and are shedding light on the true scope and cost of these crimes.

Staged collisions, where accidents are orchestrated in order to collect hefty insurance payouts, are becoming increasingly common in Canada's urban centres. These activities not only put public safety at risk by often targeting innocent drivers, but also contribute to higher insurance premiums for all Canadians. In Ontario alone, industry estimates have previously indicated that \$1.3 billion of the annual claims paid out by insurers are fraudulent. These scams are not limited to the individuals who engineer the collisions; they can often involve a larger network of service providers including towing companies, medical clinics, body shops, paralegals, and rehabilitation facilities. Furthermore, these crimes are linked to organized crime, the proceeds of which are believed to fund other illegal activities within and beyond Canadian borders. To get a better handle on the true impact and costs of auto insurance fraud in Ontario, a new study by a major accounting firm is currently underway, the results of which will be shared with the Ontario Anti Fraud Task Force.



THE LEADING EDGE

Message from CPKN's President

In an adverse economy, it's understood that compromises must be made. In policing, training budgets are often among the first and hardest hit. Though this may provide some short term relief,

it's contrary to the interests of both officer and public wellbeing. But there are alternatives. Technology supported learning is a bridge between destructive compromise and constructive innovation. The real challenge lies in crossing the chasm.

In Canada, recent statistics indicate that \$12 billion is spent annually on public policing. Of that, an estimated \$1 billion – about 8% of the total police budget – is used to train police officers. But there's a lot of uncertainty around that \$1 billion figure. When it comes to documenting the costs associated with training, reliable data is hard to come by. In fact, the costs could be much higher.

What's unfailingly apparent is that in today's economy, tightening budgets and reduced resources demand a new approach. So regardless of what the actual number is, there's intense pressure to make it smaller. In every sector, this environment is driving innovative solutions to increase productivity and decrease costs. But to effectively assess new approaches, benchmarks are needed to calculate returns on investment. In the police training world, those benchmarks are often hard to define.

When it comes to innovating the police training model, understanding the economics around e learning and other technology supported approaches is becoming increasingly important. While published statistics are scarce, CPKN has accumulated significant data on e learning adoption trends and utilization metrics from the Canadian police community. That data shows that in the last five years, learners registered to the CPKN online learning platform have increased by more than one thousand percent. Learners are also taking more courses with course completions rising from 0.7 to 3.4 courses per learner within that same period. On average, ninety five per cent of learners report that online learning 'works well for them'. Clearly, e learning is well accepted at the learner level.

From an organizational perspective, there is growing evidence to support cost and efficiency benefits. Analysis of a sample group of police services using CPKN shows that over a one year period, the average cost per user for CPKN courseware was just \$13. As a collaborative network, CPKN has obvious advantages that enhance cost efficiencies: partnerships with the Police Sector Council and other agencies enable CPKN to develop and deliver training to end users at no cost or at significantly reduced rates; discounting and licensing options provide increased savings on volume based initiatives; also, CPKN's highly experienced development team is able to turn out high quality courseware more efficiently, thus reducing the overall cost of production.

But the real value in e learning is the ability to 'build it once and use it many times' and police services that incorporate e learning into their training curriculums are seeing remarkable savings. For example, when Ottawa Police Service transitioned its bi annual Suspect Apprehension Pursuits (SAP) recertification program to an online format, annual savings were calculated to be \$500,000. Using a blended approach for general investigation training, Toronto Police Service reduced program training time by sixty percent while increasing training capacity by one hundred and eighty percent. With online delivery, in just four months the Ontario Provincial Police achieved a compliance rate of ninety four percent among more than six thousand members on a mandatory initiative to reduce officer involved collisions. Time and again, the evidence shows that e learning is economical, efficient, and effective.

However, despite significant growth and an expanding body of supporting evidence, e learning is still only a small component of the overall training model for Canadian police. There is a tremendous opportunity to streamline and enhance police training but there is also a fundamental resistance to change.

(con'd on Pg. 3)



Follow Sandy on Twitter:

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The Leading Edge, con'd from Pg. 2

That resistance is not unique to the Canadian police sector. In a recent study¹ from the UK's Cranfield School of Management, researchers discovered that when it comes to innovation, the justice system as a whole is limited by the innate traits of the industry. Specifically, silo configurations, reluctance to deviate from established performance targets, and a traditionally risk adverse culture have all been cited as barriers to innovation. That's not to say there aren't examples of innovative applications within the industry – there are many – but rather specific mechanisms for managing innovation are lacking. As a result, there is no process to proactively pursue and implement new approaches.

Beyond defining the barriers to innovation, that study, which surveyed senior level decision makers from numerous European justice organizations and analyzed several innovation cases studies, identified some key elements for success. At the top of the list was effective leadership. While bottom up input and acceptance are important drivers, like that seen among CPKN learners, a command structure that creates and supports a responsive environment for innovation is critical. Publicizing the benefits of successful initiatives is also key to raising awareness within the sector. Sharing successes builds confidence in new approaches and provides other organizations with an opportunity to consider implementing similar programs. In the Canadian context, events like CPKN's annual Stanhope Conference are significant factors in increasing the acceptance of e learning among police services. Furthermore, the Cranfield study points out that on its own, technology is only a tool; effective adoption is the linchpin to realizing the true benefits of innovation.

¹ David Baxter et al., *Innovation in justice: New delivery models and better outcomes* (Cranfield School of Management, December 2011).

Until now, when it comes to technology supported learning in policing we've been, at best, dabblers. There are pockets of genuinely innovative application but overall adoption of available technologies has been make shift and sporadic. However the time is fast approaching when the reality of today's economy will close the gap between 'sampling' the technology and a serious effort to reform a costly and outmoded system. The successes and lessons learned from early innovators provide valuable insight into the path ahead and ongoing research from CPKN, the e learning industry, and the sector at large will further facilitate the challenge of transition. Making a change isn't easy, but rest assured, it will be a change for the better.



Sandy Sweet
President and CEO

Have an Online Training Idea?

Submit your suggestions via CPKN's **Topic Suggestion Form**.

All topics will be reviewed by CPKN's National Advisory Group.

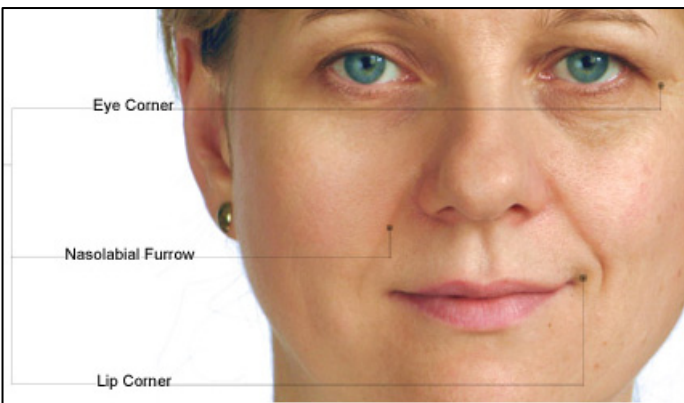
Submit your ideas today at:

www.cpkn.ca/course_selection



New at CPKN: Deception Detection Techniques

Deception Detection Techniques is now available on CPKN. This four hour, introductory course will provide all law enforcement personnel with the knowledge and skills needed to identify and resolve deception indicators.



Developed by the US Department of Homeland Security and made available to Canadian law enforcement through Public Safety Canada, *Deception Detection Techniques* is designed to increase knowledge and skill in the identification and resolution of deception indicators, specifically in the areas of the face and body. The course places particular emphasis on the recognition of facial expressions of emotions that are associated with deception. Because the skills learned in this course are perishable, learners are encouraged to re-visit the practical exercises on a regular basis.

As part of the distribution agreement with Public Safety Canada, free registration will be given to the first 500 learners (or for the first six months, whichever comes first). Free access will apply to individual learner registrations. Police services, including services that have existing portals on the CPKN LMS, that are interested in registering a group of learners must contact CPKN's Support Desk at support@cpkn.ca or 1 866 357 2756.

Learners who receive free access must complete the

course by September 30, 2012. After that date, if a learner has not completed the course, his/her access will be removed. After the free registration period, the registration fee will be \$50 per learner. Discounts and licensing options will apply to volume purchases.

For more information about this course, please visit http://www.cpkn.ca/course_deception_detection.

Other Recent Releases:

Offence Related Property Fundamentals

A 3 part series exploring the issues related to ORP and how such property must be dealt with in order to comply with the law.

Content Provider: RCMP

Duration: Varies by course; total series is 13 hours

Price: Varies by course; total series is \$125

URL: www.cpkn.ca/course_orp_1

Human Trafficking

Training to help law enforcement professionals detect and investigate potential cases of human trafficking.

Content Provider: RCMP Human Trafficking National Coordination Centre

Duration: 3 hours

Price: Free access until June 30, 2012; then \$25

URL: www.cpkn.ca/course_human_trafficking

LIDAR Refresher Training

Reviews the principles of speed management, LIDAR theory and technology, health and safety issues, and court preparation.

Content Provider: York Regional Police

Duration: 2.5 hours

Price: \$50

URL: http://cpkn.ca/course_lidar_refresher

Staged Collisions, con'd from Pg. 1

While auto insurance fraud occurs throughout North America, Ontario (and the Greater Toronto Area in particular) is the Canadian hotspot. As a result, the Ontario insurance industry has been taking greater countermeasures against highly sophisticated auto fraud rings and associated service suppliers. In addition to tightening auto insurance rules, including reductions to minimum basic medical and rehab coverage and higher deductibles for basic insurance, various initiatives with police services are hitting their mark.

Most recently, Project Whiplash, a joint investigation between the Toronto Police Service Traffic and Financial Crimes Units, Insurance Bureau of Canada (IBC), insurance companies, and the Financial Services Commission of Ontario culminated in 37 arrests and 130 charges, linking back to 77 alleged collision incidents. An earlier investigation, dubbed Project 92, resulted in some 300 charges against 42 individuals – 30 of whom have been convicted to date with more pending. These are impressive outcomes, but in reality, address only a fraction of the problem. At present, there are approximately 40 to 50 active multi claim projects under investigation by IBC in Ontario.

At the outset, the catalyst for the Project 92 investigation was one Toronto Police Service officer whose suspicion was sparked at a collision scene. That suspicion arose from the officer's specialized training in accident investigation and eventually led to the dismantlement of one of the province's largest staged collision fraud rings. Though IBC offers a range of training programs and resources to better inform police officers about various elements of auto insurance fraud, as the problem of staged collisions continues to grow there's a clear need to get more information out to more officers.

"Auto insurance fraud is on the rise in Canada," says Rick Dubin, Vice President of Investigative Services at IBC. "The more informed police officers are on this issue, the more we can disrupt and disable these types of criminal operations."



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In one instance, compelled by an increase in suspect claims in the York region, IBC began to work with York Regional Police to enhance officer awareness about staged collisions. At first, IBC provided a simple list of indicators that YRP officers could refer to while at the scene of an accident. However, by 2011, there was a push to develop a more comprehensive approach and York Regional Police and IBC collaborated to create a full online training resource. That partnership, which included an IBC subject matter expert and YRP's Training and Education Bureau, Community Resource Centre, and Major Fraud Unit, resulted in the *Identifying Staged Collisions* e learning course.

This 45 minute course uses videos to illustrate common types of staged collision scenarios and describes the various signs, indicators, and behaviours that may characterize a staged collision. However, knowing the issue of staged collisions reaches far beyond its own jurisdiction, YRP has now made the course available to a national police audience via the Canadian Police Knowledge Network. In turn, CPKN and IBC have partnered to sponsor a year long free access period to the course for all Canadian police officers.

(con'd on Pg. 6)

Free Learning & Evaluation Event until June 30, 2012!

Human Trafficking

Training to help officers detect and investigate potential human trafficking cases, identify potential victims, and provide greater assistance to victims.

Content provided by the RCMP Human Trafficking National Coordination Centre

Canada ¹⁺¹ *Development funded by the Government of Canada's Sector Council Program.*



Visit www.cpkn.ca/course_human_trafficking for details.

Staged Collisions, con'd from Pg. 5

The merger of IBC, YRP and CPKN expertise speaks volumes on the value of collaborative training within the Canadian police sector. While IBC and YRP have developed and packaged expert content for a high quality learning experience, CPKN provides a point of access for a national police audience. CPKN also offers a range of value added services to maximize and measure the outcomes of this initiative. As the hub for online training for Canadian police, CPKN is able to generate awareness among an extensive network of stakeholders; a centralized delivery platform will ensure uptake and learner progress is tracked and measured; learner surveys and participation based research will gauge the effectiveness of the training. By pooling collective knowledge, resources, and means, the sector as a whole benefits.

"These types of partnerships give incredible value to the Canadian police sector," says Sandy Sweet, President of CPKN. "By sharing learning opportunities, police officers gain knowledge on topical issues, police services save on training costs, and Canadians in general benefit from a more informed policing sector."

"This initiative is a key part of the strategy to get the upper hand on these types of insurance scams," concludes Dubin. "Providing this learning resource to police officers across Canada will significantly improve the detection and conviction of fraudsters."

Identifying Staged Collisions will be offered all Canadian sworn police officers at no charge until December 31, 2012. For more information or to learn how to register, please visit the CPKN website at www.cpkn.ca.

Technical Discussion Boards Added to CPKN Trainers' Forum

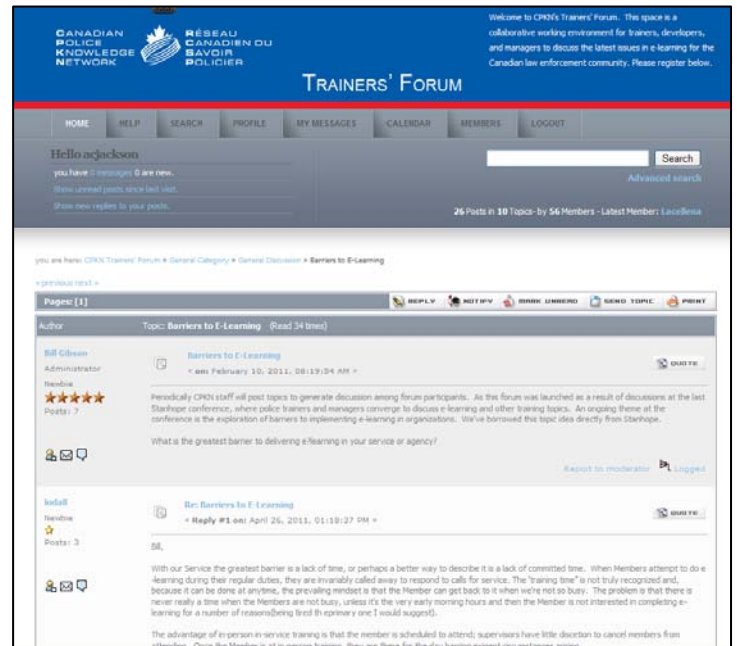
CPKN's Trainers' Forum has recently been expanded to include Learning Management System and Course Development discussion areas. These new discussion boards will enable trainers, learning managers, and developers to share information and practical advice for the creation, delivery, and management of online police training.

The Trainers' Forum was launched in 2010 as a virtual community of practice for the Canadian law enforcement community. Within this space, members can connect on a wide variety of e learning issues including the challenges, solutions, and elements needed to create successful online learning models.

"The police community is continually advancing their online learning agendas, becoming more sophisticated and engaged," says Bill Gibson, CPKN's Manager of Strategic Initiatives, who oversees the Forum. "This has led to a greater need for information around the technical aspects of online learning."

While some organizations have their own LMS applications, numerous other police services across the country have invested in designated portals on CPKN's LMS. While these tools enable these services to manage and track their online learning initiatives, LMS and portal administrators are tasked with learning the ins and outs of the systems. The new LMS discussion board will focus on LMS and related technologies and platforms, including portals. In this space, administrators can ask questions, share information, and provide experience based advice.

Similarly, more and more services are developing e learning to meet identified training objectives. While some courses are developed strictly for internal use, others are shared with the sector at large via CPKN. In either case, it's important that courseware incorporates recognized standards to ensure effective learning experiences. The Content Development board will provide an environment for instructional designers, developers, and others to



The CPKN Trainers' Forum now features LMS and Course Development discussion areas.

discuss technology standards, methodologies, tools, and processes used in the design and development of e learning courses.

The CPKN Trainers' Forum is a secure environment. New users can register via CPKN's website (see Trainers' Forum section below the News Headlines area on the CPKN homepage). Because the Forum is designed for the Canadian law enforcement sector, all registration requests are reviewed before access is granted.

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**CANADIAN
POLICE
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**RÉSEAU
CANADIEN DU
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POLICIER**

Established in 2004, CPKN is Canada's leading not for profit provider of online training solutions for police and law enforcement. Working with subject matter experts from police services, training academies, and other sector organizations across Canada, CPKN develops, delivers, and supports highly effective and cost efficient e learning solutions to meet the needs of frontline personnel.

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