



Indoor Firearms Range



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Executive Summary

Police training has come under scrutiny recently by both practitioners and academics who question the quality of education of its police members prior to beginning their careers and the ongoing training they receive once they have commenced their duties. Police organizations recognize that public expectations of its police services have changed with priority being placed on transparency, accountability, effectiveness, efficiencies and modernization. The purpose of this proposal is to identify the requirement for an indoor firearms range held within the Barrie-Simcoe Emergency Services Campus, in order to enhance and modernize our training capability. The creation of an indoor firearms range will ultimately have a positive impact on how the public views our Service and will speak to our ability to effectively provide a realistic training environment to all our sworn members in an efficient manner that will ultimately minimize any future liability.

The Barrie Police Service currently employs 237 sworn members. Each sworn member is issued a Glock pistol and ammunition. Further, each sworn member is required by adequacy standards to train and qualify annually. It is anticipated that with the annexed lands acquired by the City of Barrie and the expected increase population growth by 2040, the Barrie Police Service will have approximately 400 sworn officers.

At the present time, there are no firearms training facilities associated to the Barrie Police Service. The Service is presently using the Barrie District

Hunters and Anglers Club in the Town of Midhurst. This location is rented annually by the Service with an estimated cost of \$20,000 per year. The Service uses the range every other day during In Service training (annual mandated training), numerous days for C-8 rifle training and sighting, several days for C-8 rifle requalification and sighting, and the tactical team uses the range for training on a regular basis. In 2016 the range was used every month throughout the year. With the expected increase in the Barrie Police Service staffing complement our officers will use the indoor range for training almost every day of the year.

In terms of efficiency, the Service would benefit by reducing expenses for on duty officers to practice on an indoor range within the same complex and eliminate the need for any travel time. The current outdoor range cannot be used during extreme weather conditions, whereas indoor ranges provide optimal conditions that can be varied depending on the training requirement. With modern technical advancements the service can improve settings within an indoor range and provide a virtual reality environment for realistic scenarios.

This proposal will identify the requirement for an indoor range based on evidence grounded in police accountability, transparency and elements associated with risk management by minimizing areas of high liability through ongoing police education and a move towards a modernized Police Service.

Description of Indoor Range

An indoor range located on the Barrie-Simcoe Emergency Services Campus would include 12 shooting lanes situated in an open area (there is room for 12 officers to shoot but the shooting lanes are not segregated or partitioned). The open area allows for lateral movement and flexibility to utilize barricades and other props during training. The range will be 50 meters in length to allow for pistol as well as C-8 rifle training and qualification and facilitate shooting from varied distances, which is required by Provincial Adequacy Standards.

A controlling system will allow targets to be displayed to the shooter at varying intervals. As well, the system would allow the lights to be controlled to facilitate shooting in low light conditions which is also a mandated Adequacy Standard. Further, police lighting and strobe lights along with a PA and other noise making systems will allow the range controller to stress officers in a controlled manner to realistically simulate conditions officers will encounter in the course of their duties.

The indoor range will also include a mechanical room that will operate proper ventilation and disposal systems to ensure the safety of officers using the range as well as the responsible disposal of contaminants.

Rationale

Based on the present number of officers (237), In-Service Training is scheduled annually. It is expected, that with the projected increase in staffing the indoor range will be used on a daily basis. The range is an integral part of training and is utilized for provincially mandated qualifications as outlined by the Police Services Act as follows:

Police Services Act O. Reg 552/92, s 9.

14.2 (1) A member of a police force shall not use force on another person unless the member has successfully completed a training course on the use of force. O. Reg. 552/92, s. 9.

(2) A member of a police force shall not carry a firearm unless, during the twelve previous months, the member has successfully completed a training course on the use of firearms. O. Reg. 552/92, s. 9.

14.4 (1) The training courses referred to in sections 14.2 and 14.3 that a member of an Ontario police force as defined in the Interprovincial Policing Act, 2009 is required to take shall include training on the following matters:

1. Legal requirements.
2. The exercise of judgment.
3. Safety.
4. Theories relating to the use of force.
5. Practical proficiency. O. Reg. 264/10, s.

The training prepares sworn members of the Service to respond to immediate, spontaneous, lethal attacks by providing Barricade Shooting scenarios and Immediate Rapid Deployment training. The training has a large scope and may include scenarios with multiple threats or uninvolved subjects and requires members to prepare for an integrated approach for a sudden transition to firearms from arrest and control techniques. All scenarios are more achievable in a controlled environment.

The current outdoor range is subject to Municipal By-Laws of the Town of Midhurst that prohibits shooting before 9 a.m. and after dusk. This prevents the instructors to control the environment for low light shooting using pistol and carbine mounted flashlights and therefore limits the training exposure for each sworn member.

Every sworn officer in Barrie is trained annually on their pistol and must pass the mandated shooting qualification. This requires one full 10 hour day of training and shooting. This amounts to approximately 2,370 hours on the range, which does not include officers that are trained on C-8 rifles or the Tactical Unit requirements.

Finally, adequacy standards dictate that police officers must train to shoot in low light conditions. This is not possible in the current agreement that the Barrie Police Service has with the range it leases.

C-8 RIFLES

The Barrie Police Service has officers trained and deployed with the C-8 rifle. Officers that are trained on C-8 rifles require 40 hours of initial training. This initial training is delivered annually to officers that are issued this firearm. Each officer also requires one day of re-qualification training a year. They are also required to attend the range quarterly to ensure their sights are properly aligned. Currently C-8 rifle training is dependent upon

range availability and must be worked in around In Service training as well as training done by the Tactical Unit on the outdoor range.

TACTICAL UNIT

Provincial Adequacy Standards require that the Barrie Police Service maintain a Tactical Unit with access to specialized weapons and training. The Barrie Police Service Tactical Support Unit consists of tactical officers and Canine officers. This unit trains on a regular basis and spends the majority of each training day on the firearms range to ensure proficiency and accuracy. The Service also delivers a Tactical Officers Course to ensure successful candidates are identified for attrition.

In addition, the current use of the outdoor range at the Barrie District Hunters and Anglers Club compromises efficiency. The accumulated travel time back and forth to the range is approximately 20 minutes each way and is 13km each way. This adds mileage to each police unit taken to travel to the outdoor range and results in them not being available to respond to situations within the City of Barrie.

Efficiency and Effectiveness

As the range is currently rented, the contract can be cancelled at any time. Other police services have used this range and their contracts were cancelled by the Barrie District Hunters and Anglers Club. The result is that these other police services continue to seek alternate areas to conduct

their training. If the range was not available, provincially mandated qualifications would have to be done at another range and the options are extremely limited.

Some of the other options reviewed in the past include the Private Gun Clubs, Canadian Forces Base Borden (CFB Borden), and other police service ranges.

Private Gun Clubs are expensive to rent and also have safety concerns with the Gun Club members accessing internal cameras remotely and attending at the club while police members are training. Police pistol techniques are different from club rules and created issues with Gun Club members taking exception to police training. Additionally, taking up range time that is available to private club members is an issue. Private gun clubs also have paying members who want to use the range and as a result Barrie Police Service members would become ancillary users that do not get priority over private gun club members. The use of the range becomes limited to weekdays, hours of use and can be cancelled by the club at any time.

CFB Borden has been used in the past but is a long commute, 31km each way and approximately a 35 minute drive each way. Barrie Police Service is not the Military's priority and therefore the range can be cancelled at any time with minimal notification. The use of their range, which is also outdoors, requires three (3) months advance booking, which can also be

cancelled in short order. This is extremely problematic when attempting to schedule the mandatory training for our organization.

Membership at gun clubs in Ontario has soared in the past several years. For example, membership at one private gun club was approximately 200 in 2011 and in 2017 are over 1000 members. This is a trend that all clubs have experienced, and as a result, many are not accepting members nor have a significant waiting list (2+ years).

This equates to more members using the range, which means more competition for range time. Clubs have paying members to answer to, and as a result, law enforcement rentals are at a premium - both in terms of cost and in terms of availability.

Private gun clubs are realizing that this is a situation where they can easily capitalize on demand, and it is anticipated that range rental prices will go up because of it.

The result is that the Barrie Police Service is competing against other police services and other law enforcement agencies as well as private gun club members to secure the required range time to complete mandated training.

Other Police Services are not viewed as a viable alternative. The closest police service to the Barrie Police Service that has a range is the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) in Orillia. The OPP is not in a position to allow Barrie Police members to use their range as they utilize their range exclusively to train their own members and cannot afford to share range

time with the Barrie Police Service. In fact, the OPP continually seeks opportunities to partner with other agencies to secure greater access to gun ranges.

The following police services have been canvassed in regards to allowing the Barrie Police Service to use their firearms range:

York Regional Police
Toronto Police Service
Peel Regional Police
Halton Regional Police
Ottawa Police Service
Niagara Regional Police
Waterloo Regional Police
Kingston Police Service
Guelph Police Service

These police services are also not in a position to accommodate the Barrie Police Service as they need the range time to facilitate training and qualification of their own members.

The highlighted options are not exhaustive but demonstrate the obstacles when attempting to use alternate firing ranges. Other options have been explored but all the choices have an impact on the financial feasibility, access to BPS members, travel distances required, safe and controllable environments.

WEATHER AND SAFETY

The weather plays havoc with the outdoor range and conditions are often less than ideal.



Snow, rain, freezing rain, insects, and flooding are common issues that need to be taken into account when training outdoors. The range is often extremely muddy and officers may injure themselves by slipping. Range motion is limited on these days. It is also not uncommon for range training days to be cancelled due to poor weather or unsafe conditions.

Range rescue vehicles (used in case of an accident on the range), have been stuck in the snow and have had to be pushed out. If an accident were to occur on the range there is a possibility that response vehicles would not be able to leave or gain access to the site which is extremely problematic and increases the risk of all members involved in the training.



Comparative Analysis

At a glance, some of the Services across the Province of Ontario currently offering Indoor Ranges for the sworn members include but are not limited to the following agencies:

1. Ontario Provincial Police
2. Toronto Police Service
3. Peel Regional Police
4. York Regional Police
5. Ottawa Police Service
6. Durham Regional Police
7. Halton Regional Police
8. Hamilton Police Service
9. Waterloo Regional Police

10. Niagara Regional Police
11. London Police Service
12. Windsor Police Service
13. Kingston Police Service
14. Guelph Police Service
15. Sault Ste. Marie Police Service
16. Sarnia Police Service
17. North Bay Police Service

Proposed Practical Application

The Service had originally requested 15 bays. These bays allow for up to 13 officers to be trained at a time as exterior lanes are not frequently used. This would permit movement after firing ammunition and would enhance range safety and sustainability; however after more consultation, it was determined that 12 bays at 50 meters would be suitable for the Service.

The Barrie Police Service Training Unit has advised that class sizes are expected to be 24 officers, based on the size of the service in the projected future. Each firing line would allow 12 officers to shoot and move laterally in a simultaneous fashion. A 12 bay range would permit two (2) lines of fire and would be the most efficient use of the space. The range would also be equipped with moving targets to facilitate a realistic environment.

An open range style versus segmented lanes allows more versatile use of the range as well as being the most cost effective. Range safety officers can view the whole line with unobstructed vision. Barricades and vehicles can be placed on the range as obstacles allowing officers to shoot in

challenging situations. The range will be designed to have 12 turning targets and a moving target. This results in the most efficient training practice.

Financial Implications

The extent to which this business plan may impact established budgets for the proposed new building is significant but when taking into account the growth of the organization and the significant cost savings on the efficiency and effectiveness, the Service will benefit in the long term.

Conclusion

In support of research grounded in police accountability, transparency and elements associated with risk management by minimizing areas of civil liability, this proposal must be considered as a viable option to mitigate risk

Effectively seeking to limit known liabilities with the frontend outlay of capital is indicative of progressive organizations seeking to manage future risk rather than its eventual manifestation in calamity driven organizational change. Management in organizations with this forward looking perspective mitigates this risk by strategically maneuvering into a position that addresses issues before they become crises. The above proposal seeks the addition of an indoor firing range that is integrated with the new building to better enable personnel within our Service to effectively and efficiently train and control the environment.

Building our own indoor firearms range allows for training indoors under controlled conditions.

In terms of efficiencies, travel time affects training time and therefore the advantages of having an integrated indoor firing range cannot be understated. If required for other duties, such as a priority call that requires a large deployment of officers, officers on the range can be redeployed without delay.

In summary, The Barrie Police Service needs an indoor firearms range situated on the Barrie-Simcoe Emergency Services Campus for numerous reasons including:

1. Complying with mandated provincial adequacy standards
2. Maintaining best practices
3. Maintaining financial responsibility
4. Allowing for greater control and flexibility
5. No other suitable options have been identified

In addition the indoor firearms range will tremendously improve efficiencies, accessibility, and effectiveness of training activity for Barrie Police Service. The indoor firearms range will provide Barrie Police Service with unobstructed access to a dedicated, flexible, rugged, year-round space to carry out provincially-mandated firearms, tactical, and scenario-based training activity that is currently conducted at an outdoor property outside the City, where limited access, unpredictable weather conditions, an

uncertain future and operating travel and salary costs have impacted the efficiency and effectiveness of training for years.