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PUBLIC ORDER TRAINING/TJ/EXT.53657  
Our ref.  
Your ref.

26 October 1995

Dear Kevin

Thank you for your correspondence that I have been receiving since taking part in the ATC Course in Bath, I wish to take this opportunity to up date you as to the present situation with regards to the issue of batons to officers in the Essex Police District.

Originally due to pressure from our Police Federation and as a result of an inconclusive survey carried out on one of our Divisions this Force had selected for use by all uniformed officers the PR24 side handle baton. This decision was subject of some intense debate between our department, senior officers and our Federation with the decision at the end of July being overturned by our senior officers in favour of the ASP and the Arnold (a rigid 26 inch baton) because of the reasons that had already been experienced in other Forces not only in this country but in the United States with regards to the complexed nature of the training involved for the side handle baton and in addition the unnatural method of striking with the baton itself.

Senior Officers within this Force could foresee that officers after only a short period of time would have difficulty in retaining the skill levels necessary to be proficient in the use of the PR24, so it was with this mind that they decided to allow officers to choose between the two aforementioned batons after completing their initial training. The rigid baton was selected because officers within one of our divisions had stated that they wish to have a baton which gave a visible deterrent. However, after only four weeks training to officers throughout the Force, which began at the beginning of October an overwhelming number of officers who initially thought they would select the Arnold had in fact turned to select the ASP and in terms of percentages I would estimate that so far in our Force 70% of all officers have gone for the ASP with the remaining 30% going for the Arnold baton.

In line with the Court Defensibility side of the use of the baton it was decided by our Force that all our Instructors, who also undergo training in the use of unarmed defence tactics, should be qualified as Essex Police Baton Instructors so that they are qualified in both batons using one system of training for both batons the basis of which is taken from the ASP syllabus.

Mr Kevin PARSONS Ph.D  
Armament Systems and Procedures Inc.  
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We are already receiving very favourable reports from officers using both batons and in particular the ASP and have received reports where the use of the baton has been a major factor in the safety of officers carrying out their daily duty.

I hope this information can be of assistance to yourself as our Force has been in a unique position having had the choice between two batons, friction-lock and rigid, for all the reasons that make the ASP such an effective weapon.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Johnstone', with a stylized, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Tim JOHNSTONE  
Instructor/ATC - 164  
Essex Police Public Order Training