

Canterbury Centre for Policing Research Annual Conference 2024

Theme 8: Police training and professional development

Recommendations to improve the learning and development (and well-being) of RASSO investigators

Operation Soteria Bluestone (6 pillars)

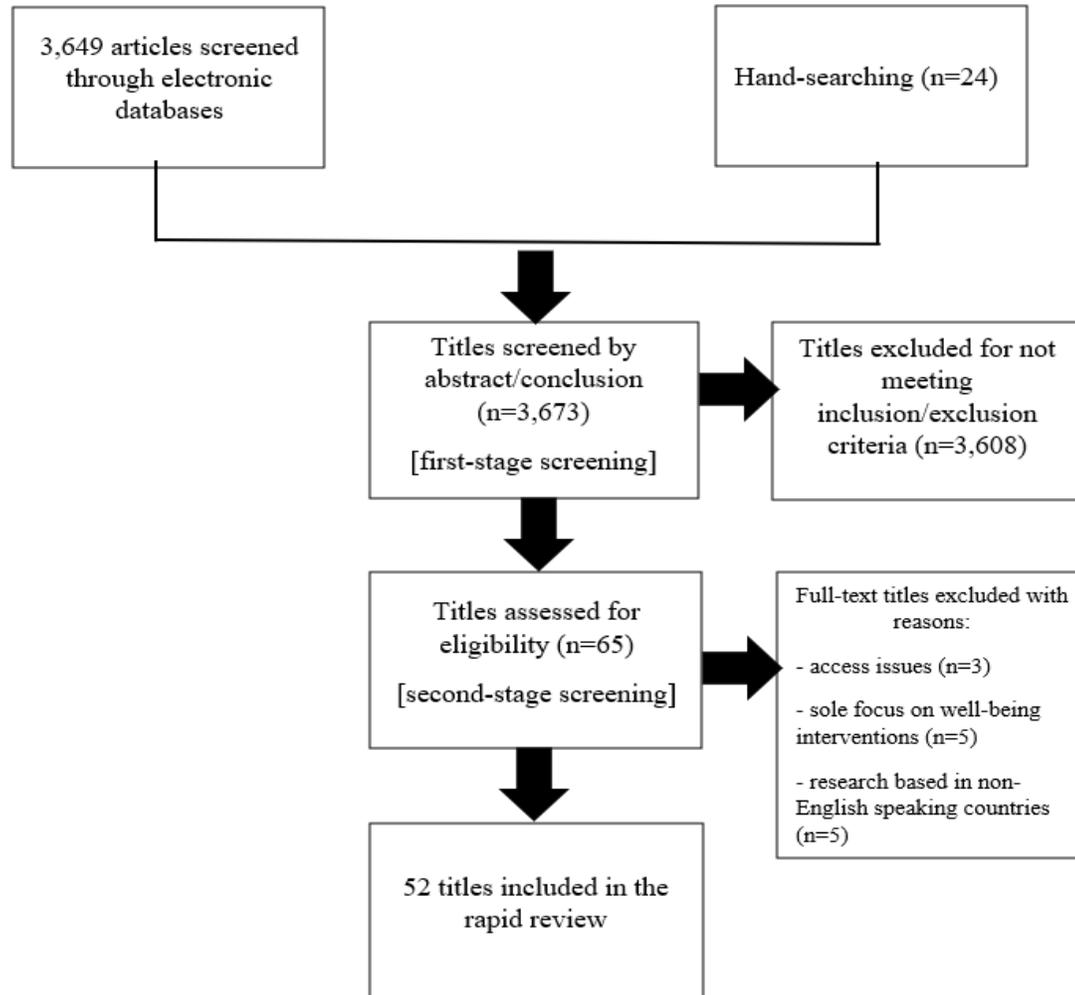


The Problem: Barriers to L&D in policing

- Shift towards **omnicompetence**; closure of specialist RASSO teams (Williams *et al*, 2022)
- **In-house training** with little quality assurance
- **Paramilitaristic / traditional approach** to L&D (Belur *et al*, 2020)
- Weak approach to L&D in MPS (Casey, 2023)
- Issue of **abstraction** from operational duties
- Possible relationship between **L&D and well-being**
- **Poor well-being** of RASSO officers (Maguire & Sondhi, 2022)
- (Slow?) journey towards **professionalization**

Rapid Review Methodology

Figure 1: The Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-analyses flow diagram



1. What is the nature of the relationship between learning and development and the well-being of police officers?
2. What is 'best practice' in relation to learning and development for those involved in the investigation of RASSO?
3. How might the learning and development of professionals who work in other public sector occupations (e.g. teaching, nursing, social work, paramedicine) inform 'best practice' in the policing of rape?

Table 1: Inclusion and exclusion criteria in the review

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Published/authored between 2000 and 2022 Published in English Research based in English-speaking countries only References to learning and development (or training) and wellbeing in general or specific policing context References to learning and development (or training) specifically in context of rape and sexual assault investigation References to learning and development (or training) in other public-service professions (nursing, teaching, social work, paramedicine) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Published/authored before 2000 Non-English-language titles Research not based in English-speaking countries Sole focus on well-being/mental health of police officers, for example, resilience training Sole emphasis on <i>victim</i> well-being/mental health, for example, crisis intervention training Sole emphasis on the effect of the COVID pandemic on police officer well-being

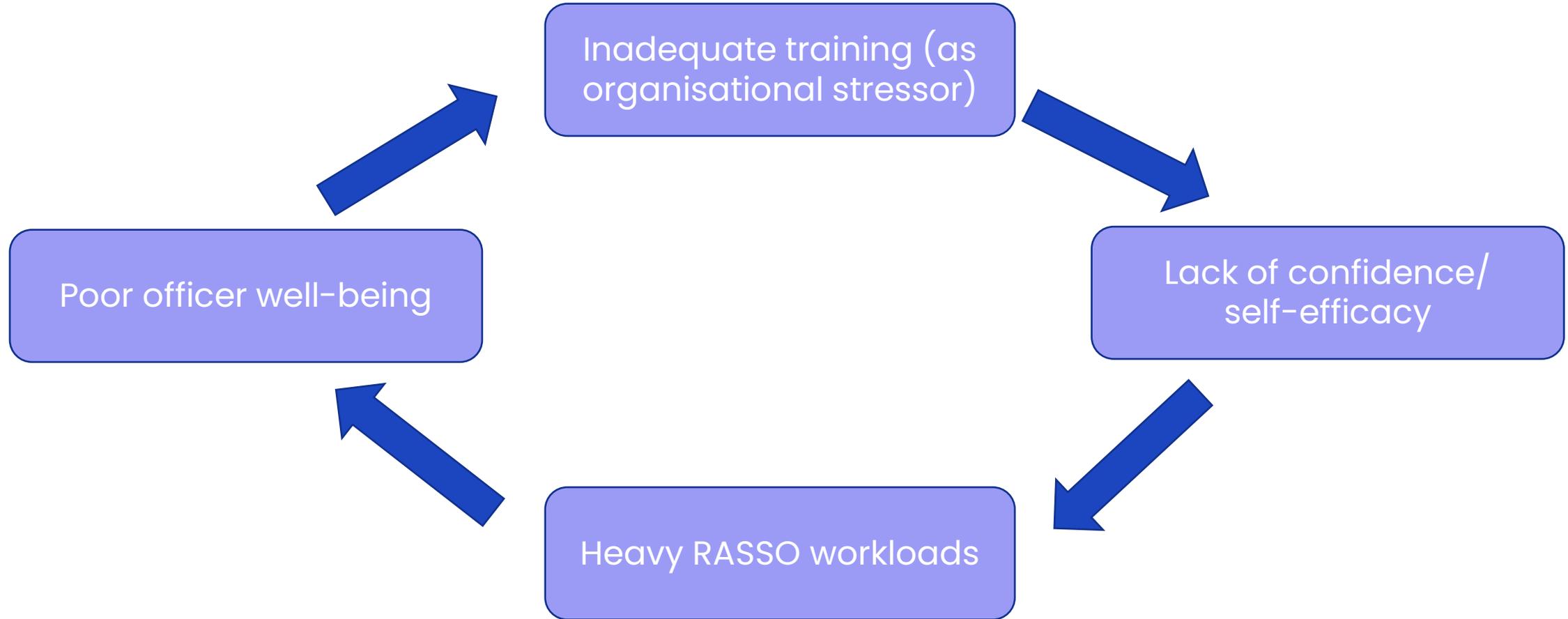
Thematic findings

	Overarching theme	Sub-theme
Content	1. Considering which specialist knowledge and skills to develop	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The need for RASSO specialism▪ Ideal RASSO course content▪ Importance of ‘soft’ skills
Delivery	2. Encouraging active and reflective learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Effective teaching and learning▪ Integrating theory and practice▪ Developing reflective practice
Evaluation	3. Measuring the impact of learning and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The need for evaluation and quality assurance▪ A diversity of outcome measures in specialist RASSO training▪ Learning as ongoing

Focus on Theme 2: Encouraging active and reflective learners

- Blended learning (face-to-face and online)
- Effective mentoring
- Active learning (role play; problem-based learning)
- Principles of adult learning (or andragogy)
- Integrating theory and practice
- Embedding reflective practice

Thinking about well-being



Potential Solutions? Recommendations for L&D

Content: heavily mandated content to enhance quality; strong focus on challenging rape myths and misconceptions

Delivery: suitable delivery modes (blended learning) with strong learner engagement, underpinned by andragogy and reflective practice

Evaluation: rigorous evaluation research with a diversity of outcome measures (attitudes & behaviour) to contribute to the evidence-base

References

- Belur, J., Agnew-Pauley, W., and Tompson, L. (2020). 'Designing a graduate entry route for police recruits: Lessons from a rapid evidence assessment of other professions.' *Police Practice and Research*, Vol. 21 (2): 134-151.
- Casey, L. (2023). 'An independent review into standards of behaviour and internal culture within the Metropolitan Police Service: Final report.' Available at: <https://www.met.police.uk/police-forces/metropolitan-police/areas/about-us/about-the-met/bcr/baroness-casey-review/>.
- Maguire, L. & Sondhi, A. (2022). 'Stress-related psychosocial risk factors among police officers working on Rape and Serious Sexual Offences.' *Police Journal: Theory, Practice, and Principles*, Vol.0(0): 1-17.
- Rawdin, C. (2023). 'Rethinking learning and development and well-being in the policing of rape: Insights from a rapid review of comparable public-service occupations.' *Policing: A Journal of Policy & Practice*, Vol. 17: 1-12.
- Williams, E., Norman, J., Ward, J. and Harding, R. (2022). 'Linking professionalism, learning and wellbeing in the context of rape investigation: Early findings from Project Bluestone.' *International Criminology*, Vol.2: 262-275.

**Thank you for
listening. Any
questions?**

