

Linda Hoel og Bjørn Barland

Major **CHANGES** sneak up on you,
silently, as if on **CAT'S PAWS**



EVALUATION OF THE
STAFF AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
AT THE NORWEGIAN POLICE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE (PHS)

Major changes sneak up on you,
silently, as if on cat's paws¹

**Evaluation of the Staff and Leadership Development
Programme at the Norwegian Police University College
(PHS)**

Linda Hoel and Bjørn Barland

¹ Quote made by an informant in the evaluation

© Politihøgskolen, Oslo 2017

PHS Forskning 2017: 4
ISBN 978-82-7808-128-0 (electronic)
ISSN 0807-1721

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Politihøgskolen
Forskningsavdelingen
Slemdalsveien. 5
Postboks 5027, Majorstuen
0301 Oslo
www.phs.no

Cover Photo: Ann-Kristin Hanssen/Fremover

Cover and layout: Eileen Schreiner Berglie

Preface

In the Norwegian Police University College's strategic plan for 2007-2012, it was emphasised that there was a need for a focus on civilian and conflict management. A new model for a staff course was established and incorporated into the Norwegian Police University College's (hereafter PHS) training programmes from Autumn 2007. Following the terror attack against Norway in 2011, staff functions were again updated and it was decided that all police districts would carry out the Norwegian Police University College's course. In addition, the Department of Continuing Education at PHS was assigned the task of mapping, evaluating and recommending new ideas in the training of staff and leadership. The new *Staff and Leadership Development Programme* was developed, and it was decided that it would be implemented for the 2014-2015 period. The present evaluation is an evaluation of parts of this programme. The evaluation does not include those parts of the programme that concern cooperation with national aid resources.

The Norwegian Police University College (PHS) has a lesser engagement with a similar international programme, Maritime Preparedness and International Partnership in The High North (MARPART), delivered by Nord University, and financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs through the Arktis 2030 grant scheme. MARPART's principle focus is the cooperation concerning emergency preparedness between the Arctic nations. The focus of the MARPART project is, amongst others, collaboration and coordination of emergency provisions. The Norwegian Police University College aims at ensuring that the experiences and knowledge identified by the Norwegian Police University College in its evaluation of the Staff and Leadership Development Programme, generally provides relevant contributions to the extent to which this is an approach to, and preparation for, staff functions, which may also be used in other types of staff work. The evaluation of the Staff and Leadership Development Programme is partly funded by MARPART²

² <https://www.nord.no/no/om-oss/fakulteter-og-avdelinger/handelshogskolen/senter/nordomradesenteret/Sider/MARPART.aspx>

We would like to offer our sincere thanks to all members of staff who put themselves forward as participants in this evaluation, and especially to all chiefs of staff who made it possible for us to carry out a coordinated data collection in a busy environment. We would also like to thank the programme leaders of the Staff and Leadership Development Programme at the Norwegian Police University College's Department for Continuing Education for consistently having the time to listen to questions, and discuss issues related to staff functions.

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1. Introduction

1.1 The Evaluation's Mandate

The evaluation of the Staff and Leadership Development Programme has a two-part mandate. Firstly, the report will evaluate to what extent the programme has reached its objectives. Secondly, the evaluation wishes to investigate to what degree participants of the programme receive a lasting education. By 'lasting education' we mean internalised behavioural change in the areas on which the programme focuses.

The evaluation is based on data consisting of observations of major staff practices and interviews with a selection of staff members. Through this data, the report highlights most aspects of the Staff and Leadership Development Programme as is experienced by the members of staff we interviewed. In order to limit the scope of the report, the learning points of the programme, which are largely linked to the task of staff functions and responsibility in severe police assignments, are emphasised. SAR practices ³, which deal with preparedness and cooperation with collaborative, civil agencies, are less touched upon.

Our evaluation draws attention to the strengths and possible shortcomings of the current Staff and Leadership Development Programme. To the extent that some of our findings should lead to change, it is not defined in this report that will make these changes; the Norwegian Police University College develops the programme in close cooperation with the National Police Directorate, and this can provide a limited scope for possible changes.

Certain findings mentioned in this report have already been changed or removed in the content of the new programme.

The Staff and Leadership Development Programme must also be seen in a developmental context associated with the policing profession, where more and more courses and training programmes are converted to a vocational education, based on research and experiential knowledge, and

³ Search and Rescue

skills, as well as work requirements and assessments that meet the demands of the Norwegian Police University College as a vocational college. This has been a continuous development at the Norwegian Police University College for 10-15 years.

Conclusions of the Report

- 1) The Staff and Leadership Development Programme at the Norwegian Police University College should continue to be further developed in concordance with its current structure and content.
- 2) The Staff and Leadership Development Programme has a well-balanced and proficiently pedagogic approach.
- 3) The E-Learning programme/lectures have been crucial for achieving a common understanding of key elements of the programme.
- 4) Those responsible for delivering the programme have a pedagogic approach that creates an excellent learning environment.
- 5) The programme is properly structured and balanced between *stress, coping, and learning*.
- 6) The unambiguous findings of the report point to the importance of “developing staff meetings” because:
 - a. It gave a clear understanding of one’s role in staff functions.
 - b. The staff functions were given a clarification pertaining to organisation, responsibility, and tasks.
 - c. Staff learnt the importance of effective work processes and methods, with an emphasis on organising and managing work within its own function.
 - d. Staff meetings also provided the opportunity to clarify and apply known procedures to communication flow, decision-making processes, and crisis communication.
- 7) The evaluation shows that there is a desire for greater challenges with regard to the “P2 function” (intelligence) throughout the training process.

- 8) The evaluation shows that the approvals of assessments within the Staff and Leadership Development Programme have had various emphasis laid upon them in the districts due to the chiefs of staff having different assessment criteria for the approvals.
- 9) The report shows that the purpose of gap analysis ⁴ as an operating method was, to a certain degree, unclear.
- 10) With regard to the programme for Staff and Leadership's (Politihøgskolen, 2014a) general objective, it is recommended that:
 - a. *Experiential learning* is formulated as a competence aim.
 - b. "Increased preparedness to handle unwanted or extraordinary incidents" (p. 4), is replaced with "*Increased and enhanced ability to take action* in order to handle unwanted or extraordinary incidents." This is to link the competence to the agent.
- 11) The formalisation of a mentoring scheme alongside major practices ought to be considered.
- 12) The Staff and Leadership Development Programme is currently not an educational programme. Converting the programme to an educational programme in line with the Norwegian Police University College's vocational programme ought to be considered.

1.2 Management of Critical Incidents

Both nationally and internationally, the police must solve various crises of a technological, environmental or human character (Rosø & Torkildsen, 2015, pp. 304-305). A crisis is defined as: "(...) an incident that has the potential to threaten important values, and weaken an organisation's ability to carry out its social functions." A crisis is by National Police Directorate (hereafter NPD) characterised as:

(...) it is unexpected, there is a lack of control, important interests are at stake, many agencies are involved, there are time constraints, regular

⁴ Gap analysis looks at the divergence (the gap) between the current situation and the desired situation. Gap analysis is a tool for determining the strength and challenges of the staff through specific initiatives, follow-ups, responsibilities, and deadlines.

decision-making processes have broken down, there is a focus on short-term solutions, there is uncertainty, and a lack of information, there is great interest and demand from various sources, and significant media interest, which is resource-demanding to deal with (NPD, 2011, pp. 24-25):

Unwanted incidents are: *an incident that deviates from the norm, and which has caused, or may cause, loss of life or damage to health, the environment, and material values*. Examples of such incidents are floods, dam failures or avalanches. They are either man-made incidents or incidents caused by nature. Extraordinary incidents are of a different severity, and examples of such are bomb threats, terrorist attacks, serious breaches of the peace etc.

When unwanted incidents, crises, and terrorist attacks occur, the public expects the police to ensure the safety of citizens, and solve the social issues as defined by the Police Act, section 1, which states in the second paragraph:

The police shall, through preventing, enforcing and supporting operations, be a part of the overall efforts of society to promote and strengthen the legal certainty, security, and general welfare of citizens.

Crisis management/leadership requires a complex competence. The knowledge and ability to *cooperate* between sectors when a crisis occurs is just as important as competencies in various sectors of preparedness. The terrorist attack against Norway 22 July 2011 was a man-made crisis that seriously challenged this cooperation (NOU, 2014, p. 14). Following this act of terrorism, efforts to strengthen the police force's ability to act within a number of key functions were prioritised. One such key function is the staff functions within the police force.

In everyday work, the police force is organised according to the line management function. During extraordinary incidents and/or crises, the police must organise themselves following a structure of leadership and decision-making that enables the police to effectively manage the situation. This is defined as "Staff and Crisis Leadership." The purpose of staff leadership is to achieve more effective coordination and management of the resources available to the police district. In crisis situations, the main task of the staff is to assist the Chief of Police in decision-making, implementation of procedures, and

procedural follow-ups (NPD, 2011, pp. 120-122) . Although the police force is organised according to the staff leadership function during a crisis, daily and ordinary incidents will still be resolved according to the line management function.

When crises occur, and the police district does not have the capacity to manage according to the line management function, staff are put in place. Staff leadership is merely a temporary organisational measure related to defined incidents. When the defined incident or situation is resolved, the police district reverts back to regular line management (Rosø & Torkildsen, 2015, pp. 304-305).

The police may also use staff in the planning of prepared events that will take place within the district, for example, major and pre-planned events that require increased alertness. This report will subsequently deal with staff functions when *crises* occur.

A workforce, or staff, will primarily consist of seven defined functions, so-called P-functions:

- P1: Personnel. Overview of the resources and staff lists (cooperates closely with P4).
- P2: Intelligence. Analysis and coordination of investigations, formulations, and responsibility for next of kin services.
- P3: Operation. Planning and coordinating of operations.
- P4: Logistics. Resource support for operations.
- P5: Information. Responsible for internal and external communication.
- P6: Juridical. Juridical advice and evaluations.
- P7: Task-dependent function.

The chief of staff leads and coordinates all staff work and reports to the chief of police who works at the strategic level.

There will also be consultants from national aid resources and liaison officers from superior and coordinating workforces connected to the police staff. Normally, staff will stay in the staff room and areas associated with the various functions. In addition to these areas, there are adjacent rooms where staff meetings take place.

Since the staff form an organisation, which is primarily established by extraordinary incidents and/or crises, it may be rare for police districts to put staff in place. Both staff work and staff functions must therefore be trained through exercises. Staff exercises have been carried out by the Norwegian Police University College for many years, but this was especially intensified after the Justice Sector was given the responsibility of developing the Norwegian Public Safety Network and establishing the Justice Sector's Course and Training Centre (JKØ) in Stavern in 2006.

1.3 Staff Functions – a Theoretical Approach and Challenge

Staff functions within the police force are a relatively recent phenomenon. Not until 1988 did the police force receive its first staff handbook, which was inspired by the Norwegian Armed Forces and was developed by police officers with long, operational experience. Work on designing staff functions for the police was constantly improved upon. *Håndbok i krisehåndtering* ("Handbook in Crisis Management") came out in 2007, and in 2011, the work was refined in *Politiets beredskapssystem del 1. Retningslinjer for politiets beredskap* ("The Police Force's emergency response system (PEPS) part 1. Guidelines for police preparedness") (NPD, 2011)

An important factor that challenges staff functions is the time factor. As already mentioned, the workforce should be established at the start of a defined crisis if the operating centre does not have the capacity to manage the situation in an effective and safe manner. From the time when the crisis is defined until when staff are put in place, crisis management will mainly be led through traditional line management. The transition and transfer of authority to the staff may often come at a time when the crisis has occurred and the action phase is over (Rosø & Torkildsen, 2015, p. 311). Until the staff are put in place, ordinary line management applies. That is, it is the leaders of the operation, through line management, who lead the police's on-site operation. In the police line management of crises, there are ongoing questions as to the extent to which line management is sufficiently trained, and prepared for managing the crisis until the staff are put in place.

Some of the criticisms received by the police after the terrorist attack 22 July 2011 concerned understaffing, meeting points, and unclear lines of command (NOU, 2012, p. 9). A better equipped police force also concerns well-trained and clear line management. Other types of incidents can also quickly turn into a phase where the workforce and a number of functions are swept aside. The NOKAS robbery in Stavanger is an example of a crisis that quickly became an investigation-driven action alongside traditional staff organisation. The complexity of this case challenged organisational thinking around extraordinary incidents in a new way (Nilsen, 2015).

During crises, unwanted incidents, and extraordinary incidents, it is the unforeseen and unplanned aspects that characterise the work (Hoel, 2013, pp. 20-23; Hoel, 2013⁵). It is precisely the unforeseen aspect that must be managed. There is a continuing question of how staff can systematically train and develop a structure of leadership and decision-making, which is capable of handling unforeseen and unplanned incidents in a professional manner.

1.4 The Staff and Leadership Development Programme is Further Developed

In the period 2008-2013, the Norwegian Police University College delivered a staff course for all 27 police districts. In a survey conducted by the Norwegian Police University College (2013), it was established that there had been major changes in the staff functions within the districts, and that the development and maintaining of staff function competence were both unsatisfactory.

The Norwegian Police University College set up a working party that would see to the content and formulation of a future staff course. The goal was to raise the overall ability to take action, among other things, by increasing the frequency of exercises. An objective of training together with the national rescue services was also defined (Politihøgskolen⁶, 2013).

⁵ Hoel, Ø. (2013). *Å være forberedt på det uforberedt. Erfaringer fra antiterrorpolitiet*. Master Thesis. The University of Nordland. Available at the request of the author: Oystein.Hoel@Nordlandssykehuset.no

⁶ Norwegian Police University College

In January 2014, the Norwegian Police University College agreed to introduce the Staff and Leadership Development Programme. The purpose of this programme was:

to strengthen the police district's staff and leadership resources in order to raise the crisis management capacity of the police district. This will be done through strengthening basic knowledge and personal skills, as well as developing the staff as a team, with emphasis on communicating an understanding of one's role, interactions, and good staff processes (Politihøgskolen, 2014a, p. 3)

Since its inception in 2014, seven police districts have delivered the Staff and Leadership Development Programme.⁷ For the first time, the chief authorities have made participation in this programme compulsory for the police districts (Rosø & Torkildsen, 2015, p. 318).

1.5 Evaluation of the Staff and Leadership Development Programme

This present report resulted from an evaluation of the Staff and Leadership Development Programme as it was delivered during the period 2014-2016. The evaluation is twofold. The focus is first and foremost on the relationship between the learning practices and the learning objectives of the programme. The programme is situated at the intersection between training and education. In this report, we distinguish between the concepts of training and education. This distinction, we understand, is that the purpose of training is to gain skills to be able to execute impromptu tasks, and accomplish the goal of a police operation. The purpose of education, however, is to develop the ability to conceptualise and expand the theoretical and analytical learning process (Kratcoski, 2004, pp. 103-104). The second objective of this evaluation has therefore been to look at which challenges the Norwegian Police University College face in balancing this training.

The evaluation is carried out as a qualitative survey based on research interviews. We review the staff members' experiences of the staff programme within the context of overall experiences of staff functions. In addition to

⁷ As of 1.11.2016

ensuring the various competence aims of the programme are respected (see below), we believe that the Staff and Leadership Development Programme will provide a training in staff functions that meets the learning and developmental needs of the staff.

1.6 The Staff and Leadership Development Programme

The foundation of the Staff and Leadership Development Programme is based on the *Program for stabs- og lederutvikling* (“Programme for Staff and Leadership Development”). This describes the learning outcomes, general proficiency, knowledge, and skills, which participants should be able to demonstrate after completion of the programme. The programme description (Politihøgskolen, 2014a, pp. 4-5) states:

General proficiency:

- Expanded understanding of one's role in staff work in general, and staff functions in particular.
- Increased preparedness to handle unwanted or extraordinary incidents.

Knowledge:

After completion of the programme, participants are able to understand:

- The national emergency alert system
- Key concepts and important principles of the staff functions
- Staff organisation, responsibility, and tasks
- Staff resources
- Interaction between the various levels of management
- Teamwork
- Work processes and methods of staff functions
- The interaction with key cooperating agencies and aid resources
- The importance of planning
- Situation reporting and decision-making
- The importance of the notary
- Crisis communication
- Experiential knowledge and learning

Skills:

After completion of the programme, participants are able to:

- Use relevant, professional tools and techniques in staff functions
- Conduct operational planning
- Compose situation reports (various levels and channels)
- Communicate and interact with the rescue services/consultants/liaison officers
- Organise and direct the work within their own function
- Implement and apply known procedures to communication flow, decision-making processes, and crisis communication

1.7 The Chief of Staff's Function in the Training

In *Veilederen for stabssjefen/* ("The Guide for the Chief of Staff"), (Politihøgskolen, 2014b) the responsibility for preparing and delivering the programme is assigned to the chief of staff. Here, it is written (p. 1):

As chief of staff, you have a decisive role in organising and implementing staff training in your police district. This responsibility is rooted in PBS I, where it is firmly established that the chief of staff has "a daily, and overall, responsibility that the necessary abilities and training of members of staff are both provided for" (p. 121). The responsibility involves ensuring that participant acquire the necessary abilities, knowledge, and skills in line with the learning outcomes.

In addition to the chief of staff's own delivery of the E-Learning programme, he/she will also enable his/her members of staff to deliver the E-Learning programme through adept organisation. The chief of staff, therefore, also has a pedagogic task within the programme.

Prior to the start of the programme, the chief of staff is informed about the programme in writing, and about the learning practices that the chief of staff has responsibility for delivering before, during, and after the programme. The competence, knowledge, and skill aims are also presented here, as well as some general pedagogical advice for the delivery of the programme. The guide also

presents gap analysis⁸ - when and how it should be carried out with regard to assessment, initiatives, responsibilities, and deadlines - as the chief of staff has responsibility for presenting it to all members of staff. Furthermore, the chief of staff is informed about e-learning. In conclusion, the written communication provides information on guidance within the chief of staff's district before, during, and after the delivery of the programme's training.

In addition to providing necessary information about the programme, *Veilederen for stabssjefen* ("The Guide for the Chief of Staff")(Politihøgskolen, 2014b), also places a clear responsibility for the entire programme on the chief of staff.

The E-Learning Programme

In *Veilederen for stabssjefen*, ("The Guide for the Chief of Staff"), it states:

Because the Staff and Leadership Development Programme will mostly take part within your own district, it was decided that you will deliver parts of the educational programme online. This applies in particular to those parts of the programme that deal with the knowledge-based learning outcomes, but parts of the skill-based learning outcomes will also be online, for example, the use of operational tools such as PO⁹, GEOPOL¹⁰ and others (p. 1).

The E-Learning programme is located on the learning platform *It's Learning* (hereafter ItL) with access to all those enrolled. Former public security minister of the National Police Directorate, Kåre Songstad, stated in a lecture on ItL that completion of the E-Learning programme is mandatory for all participants, including the operational leaders. It is expected that the e-learning component is completed before the staff meet in Stavern for the first staff exercises.

The E-Learning programme is largely structured according to the template in PBS I. The training package includes several online lectures with PowerPoint

⁸ Gap analysis is an evaluation tool that will allow staff to assess the strengths and weakness of their own staff function in particular, and of staff functions in general. Through gap analysis, one tries to identify points for improvement within the district. In addition, gap analysis in this context is a tool for the leadership of the programme to find key training elements. Gap analysis will further provide a basis for the programme supervisors' evaluation of training, and staff supervision with regard to learning and development.

⁹ The police's operational logging system

¹⁰ Police mapping, or geographic information system (GIS)

presentations, which can also be downloaded and printed. The learning objectives for each teaching topic are specified, and participants have electronic (ItL) access to the syllabus for each topic. In addition to extensive information about the various elements of the staff functions, there is also information on the Ministry of Justice and Public Security, the Emergency Support Unit, the police's national preparedness, emergency provisions, and cooperative agencies. There are also lectures on PO and GEOPOL. In addition, there is a lecture on experiential learning. The online lectures are supported by assignments and tests that the participants must complete and pass. The information on ItL provides fundamental knowledge, which is expected to be used in staff training throughout the programme. The E-Learning programme enables all districts to meet for training with a shared, basic knowledge.

1.8 Programme Supervisors for the Staff and Leadership Development Programme

The Norwegian Police University College (PHS) has chosen two experienced police officers with special responsibility, as programme supervisors, for the delivery of the entire programme. Throughout the two-year period of the programme, the programme supervisors have close contact with the chief of staff. The programme supervisors visit and supervise the staff before, during, and after the training in Stavern. In addition, they are active supervisors during the exercises in Stavern, and they guide the staff during both the major national collaborative exercises between the Police and the Norwegian Armed Forces, Tyr and Gemini respectively. As supervisors, they have a vast experience of various aspects of police work, in particular staff functions, which they use in both the designing of the programme, and supervising of the staff. In addition to their own experiences from operational police work, staff exercises in Stavern and exercises in their own district are used continuously to develop the programme. In this report, the leadership of the programme is described in more detail under the paragraph on the pedagogic approach of the programme.

1.9 Training in Stavern

The programme in this section, and the following exercise on the Justice Sector's Course and Training Centre's premises, starts at 08:15 and ends the

next day at 15:00. The various police districts meet with the entire staff, but the number of assistants and operational leaders who meet varies. This is for the individual police districts to decide. The number of participants in the exercise in Stavern will reflect the size of the police district to some extent.

Early on the first day, teamwork for the entire crisis organisation is presented. Lectures are given and opened for discussion on the importance of having a competent and cooperative team.

Gap analysis is also a key component early in the programme. On the first day, the chief of staff presents gap analysis, which is also central to the lectures introduced on that day. The presentation and discussion on gap analysis will, amongst others, form a common situational understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the staff functions within the separate districts of the participants. Thereafter, the staff are divided into groups and the points for improving gap analysis are discussed. Later in the day, staff and operational leaders receive minor cases, which they train with in classrooms. The focus of the training is on situation awareness, crisis communication, decision-making, and the teamwork between the operating centre and staff.

At 17:00, the main exercise begins on the training premises in Stavern. These are modern training premises, which are designed to train, among others, staff functions. There is a fully equipped operating centre, a staff room, and a meeting room for staff meetings. There are many who observe these exercises through large windows, and sound from the meeting rooms is transmitted to the observation deck. The venues also contain an "operation room" ("game room") for team coordinators. Operational actions can be planned and "implemented" from within the operation room.

The scenario underlying the exercise concerns a possible bomb threat or kidnapping. This is linked to serious crime and the police's ability to prevent serious crimes and terrorist activities. The scenario has been developed so that the police district (the staff) must request assistance from national aid resources. The exercise is intelligence-driven and specifically challenges communication and interaction between the P2 and P3 functions.

Pedagogic Approach of the Programme

The Staff and Leadership Development Programme relies heavily on the police force's understanding of experiential learning, as described in PBS I: "Police preparedness should be developed on the basis of experiential learning" (NPD, 2011, p. 204). The E-Learning programme has its own online lecture on experiential learning. In this lecture, the same definition of "learning" is used as that found in PEPS I:

In order to know whether the corrective measures have helped to develop new experiential knowledge, the use of this knowledge during a new incident will confirm whether such learning has taken place. The behaviour must have actually been changed. Learning is often defined as the relative, lasting change in behaviour that is attributed to previous experiences (p. 204).

If we can say something about the definition of learning as found in PEPS I, then it is that it reminds of learning through classical conditions - that is, positivistic theories of learning, where it is believed that learning has taken place if one can observe actual behavioural change as a result of the instruction and implementation of specific measures... However, in the foundational documents, *Program for stabs- og lederutvikling* ("Programme for Staff and Leadership Development") and *Veilederen for stabssjefen* ("The Guide for the Chief of Staff"), no specific pedagogical approach is formulated, except for the fact that staff learning and development should be rooted in experiential learning. Through reading these two foundational documents, alongside consulting with the programme supervisors, we had the impression that the pedagogy is rooted in a different view of knowledge. That is, that knowledge is something formed from experiences that arise from specific and relevant activities that require interaction, dialogue, and reflection. The training starts with the delivery of the E-Learning programme, after which a session is delivered within individual districts. Staff supervision is also a key component of the programme. In connection with the staff exercises, both in Stavern and in the respective districts, the programme supervisors emphasise continuous and ongoing supervision of staff members before, during, and after the staff exercises.

The Staff and Leadership Development Programme has ambitions that go far beyond the objectives of the two-year training programme. The programme also formulates a more long-term goal of empowering staff to take responsibility for their own learning and development after the programme ends (Politihøgskolen, 2014a, p. 3):

The Staff and Leadership Training Programme has the ambition to be something more than a pure training programme. The programme is intended to form a framework for three parallel processes: learning, development, and leadership, which together will contribute to a genuine strengthening of staff resources and the crisis management capacity of the police districts. With this, it is stated that there is a key aim to make the staff and leadership resources maintain themselves, and further develop individual and overall abilities after the end of the programme. It is important that the learning process of the individual participants and the team is accompanied by a systematic work on development within the organisation. A planned delivery and documentation of developmental activities and experiential learning will thus be an important part of the programme.

The programme aims to enable members of staff to continue to learn and develop the ability to work within the staff, even after the end of the programme. The quotation above shows that the intention of the pedagogical activity is to facilitate lifelong learning.

There are several pedagogical approaches that are relevant to convey, but first and foremost, the programme is rooted in 'situational and dialogic learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Here, the social context is not just a framework for learning, but something that helps make knowledge meaningful through language.

2. Method and Design

At the meeting on 10.09.2016, the evaluation assignment was discussed with the Department of Post Graduate Studies at the Norwegian Police University College. We decided to carry out the evaluation using qualitative methodology. Furthermore, it was decided that some key people within the staff of six police districts would be interviewed. The districts chosen were those that had delivered the programme. In addition, we decided to conduct interviews with the two most significant programme supervisors. We have also participated as observers in two implementations of the staff programme in Stavern, as well as observing an exercise in one district in addition to the Tyr 2016 exercise. This research-based evaluation relies on a traditional, qualitative approach, and defines evaluation as “a systematic data collection, analysis, and assessment of a planned, ongoing, or concluded activity, operation, measure, or sector” (Halvorsen, 2013, p. 16). Evaluation research has gone through various stages (Sverdrup, 2014, pp. 24-59). An example relevant to this report is that what is currently defined as process evaluations for a period is actually more akin to applied research (Sverdrup, 2014, pp. 14-19). This evaluation was carried out within the tradition of *realistic evaluations*.

In this evaluation, we want to answer the question of *what works for who under what conditions and how* (Sverdrup, 2014, p. 31). The aim of the evaluation is to determine the extent to which the intervention - in our case the Staff and Leadership Development Programme - works and how this can provide important moulds for experiences, knowledge and an enhanced ability to act, which will contribute to knowledge development within the police force in general, and within operational staff functions in particular. The evaluation is founded primarily on the experiences of the informants, and to a lesser extent whether staffs has actually become better at dealing with crises after completion of the programme. A test or assessment would have to be carried out before and after the completion of the course if an impact evaluation were to have meaning. The field of evaluation - what is evaluation, and what research is, and whether it is possible to base traditional, scientific understanding on assessing evaluations, has undergone various changes (Halvorsen, 2013, pp. 233-242)¹¹.

¹¹ See also (Schiefloe, 2009)

This evaluation has strived to meet the requirements of a research-based evaluation.

2.1 Delivery of the Programme

The interviews and observations were carried out during April-May 2016. The evaluators observed the staff exercises in Stavern conducted by two police districts, and participated in exercises within their own district, as well as the Tyr 2016 exercise. The interviews were conducted at the informants' place of employment. The requirement was that the session in Stavern would be completed and approved.

The Selection of Staff

This report is based chiefly on interviews concerning a selection of staff functions within six police districts. Two of the police districts were also observed during the training in Stavern. The police districts met for the staff exercises in Stavern with different numbers of staff. Some chose to train several assistants in the various functions. Other police districts chose to divide the P-functions among two people during the exercise. It was necessary to make a choice. We chose the nature of the staff exercise as a selection criterion for which staff functions would be investigated. The chief of police and chief of staff are obvious informants since the staff's key role is to support the chief of police in strategic decisions, and it is the chief of staff who has responsibility for this. The chief of staff is also central to the organisation and delivery of the programme in the district. The training in Stavern is intelligence-driven, and therefore it is the staff members who hold a position within the P2 function that are relevant. The P3 function is also relevant, because it is an operational exercise where this function must be viewed together with the Operational Leader, who is a key factor in this exercise, but also in staff functions in general.

Other functions may also have been a part of the selection. The P1 function concerns the employing and managing of staff personnel. The exercise in Stavern lasted 10 hours, and so this function was not suitable. The same reason applies for not investigating the P4 function: logistics. The P5 function deals with internal and external communications and so could have been of interest,

since there is massive pressure from the public in real-life incidents, but this has not been part of the exercise to a great extent (so far). Based on this, we excluded this function from the selection. The other staff functions, P6, and P7, are optional functions for staff. They are incorporated into staff work based on the nature of the incident. The same applies to liaison officers and consultants.

Observations

As participants in the staff exercises in Stavern, we observed the activity within the staff premises and listened in on the staff meetings. As observers, we were able to access the various elements of the exercise and follow these from when they came into the operating centre to when they were transferred over to the staff and presented in the staff meetings. The role of the observer provided good opportunities to see how the staff handled changes in the situation, and how this was communicated and managed within the staff functions. Of particular interest was seeing the communication flow from when the various reports were delivered to the operating centre, and presented and processed by the staff, to when the reports were presented to the chief of police and strategic operations. The purpose of the observations was to gain an insight into how staff functions occur in practice, as well as understanding how staff exercises are organised. The observations were carried out in the classroom where the teaching took place and, more importantly, in the “staff locations” where the exercises were implemented. During Tyr 2016, we observed the staff exercise at the staff locations themselves. Those interviewed were the chief of police, the chief of staff, P2 staff, P3 staff, and operational leaders within six police districts. As mentioned, the interviews were conducted at the informants’ place of employment. All interviews were conducted individually, except for the interviews with the programme supervisors. For some interviews, both researchers from the Norwegian Police University College took part, but mainly, the interviews were conducted with one informant and one researcher. The interviews lasted from 45 to 70 minutes. The programme evaluation spans several topics, questions, and inquiries related to the content of the programme: knowledge, competence aims, and form. The interview handbook also included thematic questions about staff functions in general. The interview handbook consisted of the following questions/topics:

1. What do you see as important with regard to staff functions during critical incidents?
2. When, and how often, do you put your staff in place? (Question only to the chief of staff).
3. The Staff Programme:
 - a. What were your experiences of the training in Stavern? Did you study locally or away from home?
 - b. Has the staff programme changed your understanding of staff functions?
 - c. Does the training lack anything?
 - d. Supervision and follow-up by PHS?
 - e. Conflict management between members of staff?
4. Gap analysis.
5. Experiential learning; the chief of staff as teacher.
6. The police force's task within maritime preparedness.
7. Curious about further learning?

The interview handbook was not followed religiously, and the interviews were conducted as semi-structured interviews. During the interviews, we quickly realised that the chiefs of staff and staff members had much more to say than what we sought answers for through the interview handbook. Many interviews were long and did not follow the interview handbook religiously. The interviews were transcribed by an external transcriber. The data was categorised and coded by the qualitative data analysis software NVIVO version 10. The coding was formulated from the topics in the interview handbook. The evaluation has, to a limited extent, participated in the districts' local staff exercises. This may be a weakness of the findings since the programme emphasises training within your own district.

2.2 Strengths and Weaknesses of the Evaluation

In former years, an evaluation was not seen as research. This is explained by the fact that evaluation work is governed by a mandate, and that the client's resources and time requirements provide guidance for the evaluation. This is guidance that may reduce the validity of the evaluation and prevent academic "guidelines" from being followed. There is a conflict of interest with the client or

threat of the contract conditions, which may lead the research in the wrong direction (Halvorsen, 2013, pp. 234-235). An evaluation is research if the evaluation contains the same requirements as those found in traditional research methods. In this evaluation, we believe that the academic requirements of methodology, data collection, analysis, and dissemination are taken care of. Equally, we understand that the evaluation has both strengths and weaknesses that ought to be highlighted and discussed.

This *programme evaluation* reflects realistic evaluations, i.e. what works for who under what conditions and how (Sverdrup, 2014, p. 31). The evaluation may not say anything about the effect of the programme since no measurements for the current learning points were made before, during, and after the completion of the programme. The evaluation may have, through data collection and discussions, contributed to some minor changes in parts of the programme. This evaluation report could therefore also be defined as a *formative evaluation* (Bukve, 2016, pp. 172-173). We could have interviewed staff from the national aid resources, cooperative agencies, and the main rescue centre in addition to the selection of staff interviewed here. Regarding the framework and mandate of the evaluation, however, the evaluators chose to focus on the police force's internal resources.

The qualitative approach of the evaluation may have been complimented by a larger survey, which included functional leaders, operational leaders, team coordinators, as well as assisting and cooperative agencies. One survey could have been rooted in findings from the qualitative approach. A comprehensive survey was voted against due to time restrictions. The collected empirical data consisted of interviews of 29 informants. This has provided the evaluators with the necessary empirical data to meet the requirements of the mandate within the framework of the evaluation.

The programme training has primarily been a collective process. Such a process cannot be easily separated from the behaviour of the individuals (Franke-Wikberg & Lundgren, 1990). It is therefore difficult to trace the findings back to individual members of staff.

Inside Outsiders – an Outside-Look from Within

Police researchers may have different positions within the field they study. Reiner og Newburn (2000, pp. 220-221) describe four such positions: The first position is called 'Inside Insiders', and is when police officers study the field of policing. The next position is 'Outside Insiders'. This is those who have ended their work within the police force and been appointed as researchers for the police. The third position, 'Inside Outsiders', consists of researchers who work within the police organisation, but do not have a police background. Researchers who study the police who have an academic background, but are not employed within the police organisation, are described as 'Outside Outsiders'. The authors of this report can be described as 'Inside Outsiders' as we work with the Norwegian Police University College without a professional background in policing.

We entered into the staff functions without experience, but with a theoretical approach to the field of policing. We had prior knowledge of the phenomena derived from theoretical discussions about staff as a form of leadership. We experienced our lack of policing approaches regarding staff during the exercises as subordinates. During the interviews, it quickly became clear that the police tasks such as safeguarding objects, keeping people under surveillance, and obtaining information about people at certain addresses, was, to a limited extent, regarded as problematic by the informants. The challenges highlighted by the informants were the communication flow, clear allocation of roles, the clarification and effectiveness of staff meetings, and in particular, the allocation of work between P2 and P3 staff etc. It was therefore essential that the evaluators largely focused on the exercise elements that concerned this.

Entering an evaluation project with some limitations in terms of established knowledge and experiences about staff functions can be an advantage. Looking at what is going to be evaluated from an Inside Outsider perspective can provide nuances of what is important. This perspective can also be a strength, in that we focus on what participants may take for granted. In evaluations, questions on the "obvious" can open your eyes to completely new perspectives. Through our observations, we became aware of the *culture of learning* during the training in Stavern. It was relaxed, trusting, and instilled a sense of security in

the supervision, which reduced any uncertainty associated with learning situations. When we addressed this in the interviews, the atmosphere appeared as a natural matter and not as a conscious training technique or strategy. Several informants commented that “that’s just how it is.” In our evaluation, the pedagogic approach is one of the most important reasons why the programme has succeeded.

Another, slightly more research-specific factor that the external interviewer had the opportunity to see was the informants’ use and understanding of the concept of ‘*experiential learning*’. The concept is a premise for the programme and is the crucial pedagogical idea for operational police work in general, and for staff functions in particular. Throughout the interviews, it was clear that ‘*experiential learning*’, to a certain degree, was internalised as a presumed and meaningful concept. This is not particularly relevant to the learning values of the programme - one may have learnt a lot from experiences without having a conscious understanding of experiential learning as a concept. However, it may be significant to view experiential learning as a concept that is so obscure that it is no longer valid as a description. ‘*Experiential learning*’ as an idea, guideline, or framework for the programme does not provide any significant meaning for the participants.

Evaluations of one’s own profession are a critical point of evaluation research. In qualitative research, this is discussed as the balance between *proximity and distance* (Repstad, 2007). In this context, it is timely to ask whether it is justifiable in terms of research that the Norwegian Police University College evaluates its own course. This is central to the discussion on the scholarly aspect within evaluation research (Halvorsen, 2013, pp. 233-246). In this evaluation, there is a pedagogic approach and a theoretical approach with which all aspects of the Staff and Leadership Development Programme will be highlighted. The evaluation should not only consider whether the programme has achieved the academic objectives, but also whether the programme promotes learning and development at the organisational level.

A formative assessment may be criticised for its lack of impartiality and validity. This is an important discussion (Bukve, 2016, p. 174). The research community at the Norwegian Police University College was invited to

participate in the evaluation, without having a thorough knowledge of the police force's staff functions. In order to gain a better insight into what staff functions were, and how we could understand them, it was necessary to converse with the programme supervisors. The evaluation's design, methodological approach, and the results and form of the report, are, however, research-based and were not discussed with the operational, professional environment at PHS, who ran the programme. The evaluation thus safeguards the necessary distance and objectivity (Sverdrup, 2014, p. 174). The evaluation is also based on a large data supply collected through interviews within the police districts.

The evaluation report may also be read and incorporated into the changes that the Norwegian Police University College has undergone - from being a civil service college to becoming a vocational college. In recent years, several policing subjects have converted from programmes, exercises, or courses to vocational programmes. The operational environment that has developed the Staff and Leadership Development Programme wanted an evaluation that could provide a better basis for decision-making with regard to developing the programme in a more professional direction.

2.3 Significance and Dissemination of the Report

The aim of this report is to form the basis for developing staff functions in the police districts. The report may also contribute to a more general discussion on what is good training for the police force in operational disciplines. What works well and what does not? What challenges are there in managing and carrying out knowledge development within the police force? Does the police force have an organisational structure that makes the prerequisites for organisational learning difficult to achieve? In the presentation of the results, we have chosen to show several relevant quotations from the interviews. This is done to show the empirical basis for the conclusions of the report. Some evaluation reports are presented as text based on interpretations of an empirical nature, and are therefore difficult to verify. The weakness of such reports is that the basis for the interpretation, and who has expressed it, is hidden from the readers. Research should always be disseminated to a research community that can be

constructive and critical of what has been disseminated, and it must be communicable. This report is open and public. It will initially be published in the series - PHS research. There is also an ambition to publish two articles in peer reviewed journals on the basis of this report. This is important in order to satisfy the basic evaluation research requirements of academic dissemination.

3. Results ¹²

In the presentation of the results of the evaluation, we start with the learning practices that the programme mentions as important learning tools, and see whether these have contributed to strengthening the ability to act within staff functions, in line with the general competence aims of the programme. Since the intention of the programme is to promote independent, continuous learning among staff, we also want to look into the extent to which the programme has achieved this.

3.1 Principal Findings

All informants found that the programme was successful, and the delivery of the programme has improved their understanding, abilities, and skills to carry out staff functions. They have developed as individuals and as individuals within a group. The informants emphasised the major importance that participation in the Staff and Leadership Development Programme has had to raise the entire staff's (and according to some chiefs of staff, also the rescue service's) ability to handle extraordinary incidents. The programme has reached its goal as it is formulated within the programme. One chief of staff expressed himself thus:

We have realised many things that we either “snorted at” or didn't realise before. [Chiefly] how we should work. What our mandate is, and that we should be a real reinforcement for the operating centre, that we are divided into functions, and now, everyone has a better understanding of their role. (...). We've gained more structure, we work much better together, we've discovered some work methods that we didn't see before. We work much more easily now. We have become a much better staff.

In addition to improving the staff functions, everyone experienced - from the most inexperienced to the most experienced chief of staff - that participation in the programme has made them better, more competent, and safer as chiefs of staff. In the following examples, we will look into what sort of experiences the

¹² Quotes from interviewees are in cursive and appear in spoken form. This is so that the “tone” of the interviews and the empirical data are preserved in their most “pure” form.

informants had of the pedagogical learning practices emphasised by the programme.

The E-Learning Programme

The intention of the E-Learning programme was, amongst others, to provide staff members and operational leaders with a shared understanding of the fundamental knowledge concerning staff functions, concepts, methods, and techniques so that staff had a shared understanding and fundamental knowledge when they arrived at Stavern to take part in their first staff exercise. Before we view the programme itself, it is important to establish that several police districts do not have the necessary “data solutions” in order to use ItL to the purpose of meeting the requirements as detailed in the course content.

Has the programme fulfilled its intention? First, we look at the extent to which informants regarded the E-Learning programme as successful, and secondly, how the e-learning was organised and delivered. Finally, we look at whether the E-Learning programme has contributed to a common level of knowledge for staff.

Functional Leaders

The vast majority expressed that they were extremely pleased with the E-Learning programme. The tone of the discussion among the informants about the E-Learning programme can be summarised by the words of one of the P2 functional leaders.

But I think it was a great way to begin the programme. I was very pleased with the core concept and that it was planned so you arrived (at the districts) and the staff having gone through things together, in addition to actually having to produce assignments too. I think it was absolutely brilliant. I think e-learning is excellent; you can do it wherever and whenever.

As mentioned above: e-learning can be done wherever and whenever. We see this self-determination with regard to our own learning practices as a success factor of the E-Learning programme. Such freedom also requires the individual to take responsibility for their own learning. A timely question is how this responsibility is preserved. How the E-Learning programme was delivered was specifically controlled by the chiefs of staff (this will be described in further

detail later). The police districts did not allocate work hours for this. It was the responsibility of the participants to find the time to complete the e-learning, either during the course of the workday, or in their own time. Most P function staff regarded this freedom as a positive arrangement. Many P function staff, and all chiefs of staff, said that they did their e-learning outside of working hours. That way, they could go through the programme at their own pace, print out PowerPoint presentations for each lesson, record key words, as well as rewind and listen to the lessons several times. This was completed differently from person to person, also with respect to the intensity. Having to use leisure time also made the delivery of the programme sporadic. One member of staff completed the E-Learning programme when he took part in a search for a shipwreck. There was a large area to cover, and so together with the captain and the skipper, he sat on the bridge and listened to the online lectures, and completed the tests and assignments.

A few P function staff said that they found continuous free time for e-learning during working hours, whilst most operational leaders completed the e-learning under completely different frameworks. We will return to this later.

Operational Leaders

It appears from our data that the operational leaders apparently had the most to learn from the E-Learning programme. (It may be worth noting that one police district did not include the operational leaders in the e-learning). Most operational leaders were happy to acquire the subject material through e-learning, and thought it was a “good way to learn.” They were positive about doing assignments together with others, taking tests, and “being checked up on.” For example, one operational leader told us:

One of the things I thought was good with the staff programme was the e-learning; it was great. It's given us operational leaders a great boost. Everyone had to complete it and go through it. You couldn't just do it in half an hour; you had to actually put some work into it.

In the police district where the operational leader above worked, the operational leaders were encouraged and motivated by the assistant chief of staff to spend continuous hours on e-learning when the operating centre was

well-staffed. The assistant chief of staff in this district told us that the operational leaders also received feedback of this work:

Of all the training I've taken part in, I think the e-learning was the biggest boost for my work. Because we get lost in our own little bubble - especially as operational leaders - and we don't know what's going on around us sometimes. And what other resources there are to draw upon. Most have done it (the E-Learning programme) during working hours in one way or another. All operational leaders have completed the e-learning, which I've set as a requirement, that they have to complete it. And we've followed what people have written quite closely.

This arrangement was an exception within our data. Most police districts only gave access to the E-Learning programme to the operational leaders who travelled with the staff to Stavern. The vast majority of operational leaders said that they did not have continuous time during working hours to take the lessons. They completed some lessons when they were on duty, and the rest of the E-Learning programme had to be done with a spasmodic effort, and with constant interruptions.

Professional Content

Regarding the professional level of the lectures on ItL, one chief of police thought that it “*could be discussed*”, but most informants were happy with the lectures. Many highlighted the lesson on the Norwegian Armed Forces as particularly good. A large amount of communication within the staff functions happens through PO. According to our data, there was a great deal of staff who did not have a solid understanding of the PO system to a satisfactory level. One of the informants was particularly pleased with the online lesson about PO, which also motivated him to log on to PO and “type away” in order to do some practice training with the functions.

“Seeing Connections”

Within the staff, there may also be several civilian P function staff who do not have policing experience. The E-Learning programme also emphasises that one should gain an insight into all P-functions, and not just focus on their own role within the staff. There were several people who pointed out the importance of being able to learn about their own role in connection with the functions of others. An assistant chief of staff, amongst others, told us the following:

On the P4 side of things, we have civilians who have never thought a “police-thought” in their life, who are part of the staff, and say “now we understand why we do it like that; now we realise how it’s connected.” So I have a real regard for the E-Learning programme.

Several people highlighted the importance of seeing their own function, role, and responsibility in context alongside others’. One thought that all function staff in the emergency chain ought to have completed the entire E-Learning programme together - not just the staff. One informant reflected:

I think the staff functions are actually something that you should’ve studied and learnt as a team. Because staff functions are largely about interaction. I think it’d be even better if you went through, let’s say, the presentations as a team, like if the entire staff had sat and gone through them together. Then you could have discussed them from different perspectives before coming together to form a conclusion. I think that would have benefited everyone instead of each person sitting on their little island and saying “what’s in it for me?” It would have been advantageous to have different perspectives come together. And sure, you might say that some have more need to know about national crisis management than others, but I think that if chiefs of police, operational leaders, team coordinators, and staff had sat together as a team and worked through this here, then it would’ve been something completely different, because then perhaps there would be a contribution from a team coordinator, a question or a suggestion, such as “Ah yes, perhaps this is the correct way to do it?”, because I think that this question from the team coordinator would be enough to satisfy the discussion, but I’m not sure it would move forward in this way without different perspectives.

In the future, there may be an opportunity to design parts of the programme as assignments that have to be resolved as a team. This leads us to how the chief of staff found being an organiser of the training in the districts.

The Chief of Staff’s Organisation and Delivery of the E-Learning Programme

Most chiefs of staff were extremely pleased with the way in which the programme was organised through the E-Learning programme’s preparations found on ItL with its tests and assignments for members of staff. The data shows a great deal of variation in how the chiefs of staff facilitated the delivery of the programme. Put in another way: the chiefs of staff defined and performed the teaching function in different ways. Some chiefs of staff left the

individuals to complete the assignments and tests alone, or together with others, and let them decide how much effort they would invest in this. The chiefs of staff found that the effort of staff members varied greatly. Some P function staff took on a larger responsibility and worked hard on the assignments, while others did not. Several chiefs of staff told us that they often had to press colleagues to get them to hand in written assignments. One chief of staff said that *“it was a struggle to get everyone to do this.”*

There was also variation between which requirements were set, and what criteria the chiefs of staff based their evaluations of the assignments on. One assistant chief of staff told us that participants had completed the E-Learning programme in order to stay within their staff function: *“Yes, everyone here has completed it. We’ve made a massive regime for it. You’re not part of the staff if you haven’t completed the e-learning.”* He did not tell us about the other requirements for the delivery of the programme, just that the E-Learning programme had to be completed. Another chief of staff approved the completion of the E-Learning programme for all members of staff despite the fact that the written assignments were not done. One chief of staff demanded not only that the assignments were completed in order to pass the programme, but also that the assignments were of a certain quality, and he rejected assignments if they did not meet his expectations. Participants then had the opportunity to hand in an improved product. The same chief of staff also demanded that members of staff be able to demonstrate in writing that they understood their staff function in conjunction with other staff functions, whilst another chief of staff considered the E-Learning programme passed based on a “general impression” of the person’s knowledge of their function. The chief of staff told us such during the interview:

COS (Chief of Staff): Yes, there were many who hadn’t done all the assignments.

I (Interviewer): Did they pass the programme then?

COS: Yes.

I: Even if they had not done the assignments?

COS: They passed the programme because I assessed: do they understand their function, and do they really know what they’re working on? And there was no doubt that they did. And they’d done the other stuff; they had been through the lessons and taken in the questions and everything else there. And what I’ve said

to everyone, too, is that everyone must present their function to the staff, so they all have to sit down and make a presentation of their function for the staff, explain it, and also how it will affect and interact with the rest of the staff. And everyone had done that presentation. That's what we've done here.

What we can see in the data is that the vast majority of informants are very pleased with the e-learning, but the frameworks for delivering the programme, the extent to which the chiefs of staff lead the process, and how much time each individual function and operational leader spends on e-learning varies greatly. We also see that some chiefs of staff demand requirements of the participants that go beyond the programme and *Veilederen for stabssjefen* in connection with the Staff and Leadership Development Programme. For example, a larger police district demanded that participants had to complete the E-Learning programme in order to be members of staff. Several chiefs of staff demanded that the written assignments had to be completed and approved so that the E-Learning programme could be passed. However, we cannot find such requirements formulated in the foundational documents for the Staff and Leadership Development Programme.

One chief of staff did not demand that the assignments had to be approved in order to pass the Staff and Leadership Development Programme. There are also differing practices among chiefs of staff in how they involved the operational leaders. Some chiefs of staff had actively pushed the operational leaders into taking part in the E-Learning programme and the assignments there, whilst others had not invited the operational leaders to take part in the programme. Some chiefs of staff had assumed a clear leadership role by engaging and keeping track of the members of staff in the E-Learning programme, and by stimulating group work and shared dialogue about the assignments during staff meetings.

The data suggests that the variations in the chiefs of staff's organisation and delivery of the programme may be due to an unclear understanding of the expectations that the programme supervisors had of the chiefs of staff's role as teacher within the programme. *Veilederen for stabssjefen* – where the role of the chief of staff, tasks, and responsibilities in connection with the E-Learning programme is described - was sent to all chiefs of staff, and all chiefs of staff

had a joint session ahead of the programme. This session was “*more of a review than a teaching of the E-Learning programme*”, one chief of staff told us.

We believe that there is reason to ask whether the E-Learning programme’s intention of providing a common level of knowledge has been reached. This is a question that our data may be unable to give a clear answer to. Whether or not one has acquired the necessary knowledge is best seen when the knowledge is used in practice, and those who can assess this are, among others, the programme supervisors themselves. Their experiences from the staff exercise in Stavern are in line with our data when it comes to the participants’ freedom and responsibility for completing the e-learning. One programme supervisor told us:

We’ve actually made an e-learning programme that assumes you have some basic skills within the field. And sometimes it’s quite challenging to spend time on things we think we could have done at home. They could’ve perhaps been even better at it, been better prepared, so that we could’ve focused on our objective here. And we feel that there is more room for improvement here. Some are incredibly skilled and clever, others take a little bit more time with this. And we see that when they come to us here, that the skills and knowledge within some areas are not at the level they ought to be. And we hope that the new programme makes stronger demands and requirements for the participants. That they have to deliver, this is a profession where you have to deliver.

What has contributed to positive staff development with regard to the handling of a critical incident where the staff are placed? The chiefs of staff point to several factors, and these are explained below.

The chiefs of staff thought that the supervisors from PHS were good at creating a positive learning environment. The chiefs of staff praised in particular the supervision during the exercises as especially important for being able to develop in the role of chief of staff. Everyone also pointed out the excellent communication and dialogue between themselves and those responsible for the programme outside of the exercises. One chief of staff commented on this thus: “[They] are rebuked, there are a lot of discussions, they are open to discussions, and these lads have not confined themselves to the attitude of ‘that’s just the way it is’.” The chiefs of staff were happy with the structure of the programme. It was

sufficiently fixed, and there was room for discussing and correcting problems during the course of the programme. The chiefs of staff found that the learning structure invited them to develop both the staff practices and the staff programme itself. One chief of staff felt that he and the staff “*were taken care of*” by someone who wished the best for them.

The Programme’s Term Usage

We will associate some questions with term usage. In the programme description (Politihøgskolen, 2014, p. 5), it states: “(...) emphasis will be placed on diverse forms of work such as online learning, exercises, **group assignments**, discussions, supervision, and reflections.” On ItL, group assignments are called ‘**assignments**’ but in *Veilederen for stabssjefen*, assignments are called ‘**work requirements**’. In a context of studying, a certain meaning is associated with the concept ‘work requirement’. In *Forskrift om studier og eksamen ved Politihøgskolen* § 2 (“Regulations for Studies and Examinations at the Norwegian Police University College, section 2.), (PHS. 2014c) the following description of a work requirement is provided:

Work requirements without ECTS credits are an academic requirement that the student must have approved before the student is allowed to pass the exam (...) Work requirements with ECTS credit are assessed approved/not approved.

We understand that it may be necessary to clarify the term usage concerning assignments, work requirements, etc. We also cannot see that these are described as mandatory in the programme description. In the programme description, it does not state that the E-Learning Programme is mandatory, but in the online video where the former public security minister Songstad introduces the programme, the E-Learning programme is said to be mandatory.

Summary

- The E-Learning programme is an important success factor of the Staff and Leadership Development Programme.
- All informants in the project regarded this as an integral part of the programme in order to benefit from the training in Stavern.
- The professional content is simple, but satisfies the various functions’ need of a basic introduction.

- The police districts deliver the e-learning differently. Many pointed out a need to spend more time on the E-Learning programme, and perhaps complete it in a group or together as a team.
- The chiefs of staff had different priorities when it came to delivering the E-Learning programme.
- Some police districts do not have adequate online capacity to deliver the E-Learning programme.

An important point of the E-Learning programme is that participants have completed it before the staff exercise in Stavern; there is a deadline for when the e-learning should be completed. The evaluation shows that the informants were happy to complete the E-Learning programme when it suited them, but we also saw that both the chiefs of staff and programme supervisors found that not all staff took this responsibility seriously, or had the opportunity to put the necessary work into this.

3.2 Training in Stavern

As described, the training in Stavern is an operational and intelligence-driven exercise, where the P2 and P3 functions are key. The exercise takes place in organised training venues, it is given a notification, and it has specific knowledge and learning objectives. Emphasis is placed on the understanding of teamwork and of the staff's overall strengths and weaknesses put forward by the gap analysis. The skill objectives are laid down as factors in the staff meetings. Here, the importance of making the meetings effective is stressed, and it is repeatedly restated that the meetings should provide direction and establish the work concerning the objective given at the strategic level. All this points to the learning objective of understanding one's role. Since this is a planned exercise, factors disappear such as the transition from line management to staff, which often constitutes a critical part of how the police handle extraordinary incidents. The exercise in Stavern is controlled and the participants are under continuous supervision from the programme supervisors. Even though it should be presented as an exercise that "controls its own destiny", there is room for the programme supervisors to offer guidance along the way. This is very safe, and an important explanation for a good learning outcome. The level of training aspects that are carried out during the exercise is

also properly proportioned in relation to the learning environment. Several stress factors would destroy the learning effect. The levels were stated during the staff meetings as important.

The great gain, and what I left from there with, was when we had 2 cases, and we had to try to organise the staff a little differently. They were very smart in stressing to us the importance of the structure of meetings, and it was that which was important, that's what I learnt there - how to guide the staff meetings, how much time there should be between them, and getting others to work. That's what sticks with me; that's the good education. I think those who work down there have made a phenomenal effort in terms of seeing our need. It's difficult to provide for different districts and different needs, but they have made a course that I think meets all these needs very well.

Staff Organisation, Responsibility, and Tasks

As mentioned, many of the knowledge and skill objectives are included as factors in the staff meetings. It is in this part of the programme that aspects of knowledge as key concepts and important principles for staff functions are expressed. The knowledge objectives we chose to look at will also be expressed in the skills demonstrated in the staff meetings. The main function of the staff is to provide a foundation for decision-making to the chief of police. The staff meetings are a work tool within the staff functions. A staff meeting is defined as "a tool to help create a mutual picture of the situation, inform, regulate, coordinate, and plan staff operations." There are various types of staff meetings such as Takeover Meetings/ "Initial Meetings", Status Meetings, Decision-Making Meetings, Planning Meetings, and Information Meetings. In our exercise, the staff meetings were first and foremost *status meetings*. In such meetings, it is important to have a meeting structure with the following stages:

1. Situation reporting/status (picture of the situation):
 - a. Last update from TC (presented by TC [the team coordinator] through radio/tel. or by OL [operational leader]).
 - b. Status from the functional leaders, including acknowledgement of previously assigned tasks.

- c. From coordinating agencies (the Police District, special bodies, FM [Facility Management], municipalities, others with responsibility for the sector).
2. Situation awareness, detection of critical signals, understanding of the situation, predicting the near future (development/"worst case scenarios"), time available (timeline).
3. Distribution of tasks.
4. Focus areas, priorities (be specific!).
5. Time of the next status meeting.

"Training of staff meetings" was a wake-up call for many chiefs of staff. It was emphasised that the knowledge and training of a new meeting structure at the staff meetings was "*the difference that made a difference.*" Even experienced chiefs of staff told us that they had greatly benefited from learning a new meeting structure. Many told us that they were not aware of the meeting structure that staff had (before the programme), but they now saw the importance of this as they had received training in a new meeting structure. One chief of staff said that previously they had:

Far too many meetings that went in different directions, some members of staff who took up too much time, things were talked about that were insignificant, time passed and people tiptoed around and had to answer one thing or another.

With the new meeting structure, the meetings gained a clear focus with regard to what they should spend time on, the selection of what needed to be discussed in meetings, and what the frameworks should be for the various functions. One consequence of this clarification of roles was that the staff of the various functions found that the chief of staff became a leader.

OL (Operational Leader): During the training in Stavern, I think he (the chief of staff) cut a good figure. He was very organised, consistent in the meetings, he maintained the trains of thought and leadership, and he summarised everything well so that we stayed on track effectively.

R (Researcher): Do you think that was due to the training you all had in Stavern?

OL: Yes, I do, because I'd never experienced or seen what we did there before.

The significance of the new meeting structure is not just about keeping the correct focus and having effective meetings. Several chiefs of staff found that

the meeting structure also helped to legitimise them to a greater extent as chiefs of staff in the staff meetings. They gained a clearer leadership role, and so distanced themselves from operational issues. In addition, the meeting structure has the synergy effect that when the chief of staff distances himself/herself from operational issues more than previously, he/she is found to be a better strategic advisor to the chief of police. The new meeting structure makes the staff more effective and gives the chief of staff an opportunity to be a better leader to the staff, and a better advisor to the chief of police. The quotes below from two chiefs of staff illustrate this:

R: A lot of time was spent on staff meetings. Do you think they were clear, was it something you needed training in? Were they improved?

COS: Yes, they were improved, and we're always improving. We also saw during the Gemini exercise that practising staff meetings, being "strict to the point", and doing what is important, contributed to this improvement. The staff meetings should actually be status meetings, and consist of the focus areas, and what we are going to do, not talk about every little thing.

R: It isn't a general meeting.

COS: No, and I think that was also an experience we benefited from, not least here with the notoriety of what happens, being able to use the notetaker, and receiving the notes. For the P2 function, you ought to produce a clear, written view of the situation or status, but it requires that P2 has an intelligence cell that can do it for you; you can't sit and do it there yourself, because then you fall apart, and lose the overview and the overall perspective of everything here.

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R: You said you learnt most by studying the meetings, but did you have the feeling that the staff meetings were something that needed improving before you even came to Stavern?

COS: Yes, of course, and we've felt that here, and we've agreed that we must find a better structure for the meetings, which we had tried to improve with help from them [the programme supervisors] before we went down to train here.

R: Before you went to Stavern?

COS: Yes, they were here and helped us, and we had discussions about it so we were prepared that it was going to be a major focus to put this in place. And I was the chief of staff, at least the only one around down there, and I received feedback about how this was carried out and it was very educational, as were the discussions we had afterwards. Even if I fell into the same trap during the exercise later.

The fact that tasks and updates were constantly written on a whiteboard during the staff meetings made the meetings more effective. Reiterations and uncertainty concerning what was agreed upon in the previous meeting vanished, which meant that such time-consuming reiterations and uncertainties were greatly reduced and almost completely absent. This simple tactic in the staff meetings was an important factor in making the meetings much more effective.

R: The staff meetings were improved then?

OL: Much improved.

R: You spent a lot of time on them.

OL: We did spend a lot of time on them, and we arrived at an agenda, and short, concise staff meetings.

R: It was also something you learnt down there in Stavern?

OL: Yes. And the importance of using a whiteboard. You could always go in and see, and keep sight of, the work tasks that were completed, and which ones needed to be completed.

What the meetings were used for, and what the staff wanted from the meetings became increasingly centralised, something the following quote shows:

And it's a bit like explaining how you do something starting from a single idea until you actually work through it, receiving information from different people with different experiences and backgrounds, so that you can then say at a certain point in time "This is the best we have at this time." And thus, we see that the time spent on these [staff] meetings has become significantly shorter. It's improved incredibly so. And research says, after all, that talking about unnecessary things is the worst thing to do. Because your memory's limited, isn't it? So you should only talk about things that are relevant. And so, using a whiteboard for example, it comes from research, limitations in your memory, shows how important it is to have things like that. We have loads of examples of this, for example, in connection with how many people are missing and such.

Another important part of the staff meetings was to train coordination and understanding of one's role between the functions. One member of the P3 staff told us:

P3: It's absolutely necessary that the P3 and P2 staff and their asses are physically sitting together. Don't separate them at all. They have to be near each other the whole time. This was something we got to experience in Stavern. We've had exercises here (own district) where we've had staff meetings and then been spread to the winds, and then we've had new staff meetings and we're not as calibrated when we come to the staff meetings. Someone has been doing this and someone else has been doing that, and then perhaps we've gotten our lines crossed and been working on the same thing.

Understanding one's role in the staff meetings was an important training aspect. How should P2 and P3 staff clarify their roles and tasks in an effective way? Co-location and the use of assistants were key words that kept cropping up during the interviews, something that the following excerpt from two interviews shows:

P3: We did things differently there [Stavern]. Here you saw that we separated them in two rooms. Down there we put them together within one room next to the operating centre, where the P2 and P3 worked alongside each other - Great success.

R: So you rearranged things a bit down there?

P3: Yes. There were so many of us when we arrived that it was the only way to manage it. And it worked, and the feedback was brilliant. Now, we'll reconstruct thing here; we'll reconstruct the operating centre. And then we'll tear down the NN's (Norsk Nødshjelp: "Norwegian Relief Aid") office so that it becomes an open landscape where the staff sit together to avoid P2 staff sitting in their own office. That way, we'll have a better interaction between the P2 and the P3.

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P3: What we got down there [Stavern] was a glass wall separating the staff room so that everyone could see each other. I sat there with the deputy chief of police and an analyst. We sat there the whole time and were completely available. Such that when P2 or P3 staff who sat right beside you had questions, some coordination issue, or had to make certain decisions, then they saw in and realised that now we can go in and discuss it. Then we would discuss it face-to-face and manage it without having to gather the staff for each and every question. So when we reconstruct things here, we'll build a glass cage and put the chief of staff right in the middle of it (laughter). Thus, we'll create a little staff office with 10 rooms, and a staff room where the chief of staff, and if there are still staff at a strategic level, will be, so that decisions are made continuously.

Then, if a P3 staff member is wondering about something and suggests that we go down a certain route, then we'll agree, and then we'll need 10 lorries say, then we simply call over a P4 staff member and say you have to get this for us now. It has increased the pace of our decision-making processes a lot.

Do You Prefer to Train “Locally” or “Away from Home”?

The evaluation also focused on the exercises, both in terms of where they took place, and their difficulty. The data shows that one of the best experiences for participants of the programme was that the staff got time to train together. The P function staff were very happy to travel to Stavern to train, whilst the chiefs of staff, operational leaders, and chiefs of police would rather train locally. The reason for training locally is that it is important to familiarise oneself with the staff facilities of one's own police station. One operational leader said this thus:

I: Is it important when you're training to train in your own location?

OL: Yes.

I: Would you rather not have to travel to Stavern?

OL: Yeah, it's nice being in Stavern, but it's better being able to train here. It's here where we work day in and day out. So yeah, for sure.

The importance of training away from one's location can be summarised in the following quote:

OL: I see a clear benefit of training away from home. And there's also a clear social benefit to being down there, you could say; there's something about when, in the evening, for example, operational leaders and team coordinators can sit together with the chief of police and discuss what they've done, over a... Yeah, and then there's something about leaving that discussion with something you have, um, in a way, that you'll concentrate on. And then we all have a common task to solve. So you could say, okay, it takes up a lot of time travelling to Stavern, and it costs extra money, but I really think it's worth it. But it's true that as long as we have 24/7 emergency response, then we won't all have time to do this.

In the lecture where experiential learning as a pedagogical principle is presented, the importance of *informal learning* is emphasised. Many of those with P-functions in Stavern emphasised that this informal learning was a benefit of travelling away from their location to train:

You lose yourself. It's a fuss having to travel so far, and being away from home for so many days, but it's both a steep and positive learning curve to be in such an environment. You meet in the afternoons, and then, maybe sitting in the bar of an evening, you actually discuss through things. And you meet instructors who have loads of input, you meet others like, um, yeah, you know.

However, the vast majority want several smaller exercises instead of one large staff exercise, like that found in Stavern. Some were more concerned with training in practical, communicative challenges rather than basic issues. For example, one P3 participant told us the following:

I could think of five minor cases that we went through in order to get the information that the P2 function staff had; does a P3 staff member manage to take advantage of that in his/her planning? That sort of thing. Or what does the media do with the information for the public? How well do we cope, us blue shirts, with informing the media members about what should be broadcast? During the district exercise, we worked hard on this, had to evacuate, and we didn't manage to accomplish what we decided to do; we didn't get the message; it didn't happen fast enough. That bit is really important to practice. That's what we're measured by - it doesn't matter if 50 or 100 people die anymore, only that we're informed correctly.

Summary

- The programme supervisors have found a structure for their pedagogic approach and delivery of the programme, which provides good opportunities for learning.
- The exercises in Stavern meet the staff's need of training in a positive way.
- The structure and content are well-balanced in relation to the learning potential of the programme. More, or new, stress factors within the exercises would reduce this.
- The use of time and resources spent on "training staff meetings" is a correct priority. Everyone sees the benefit of having effective and efficient staff meetings. This is one of the learning points that has, to the greatest extent, provided lasting change in the practice of the programme.
- The training in Stavern is intelligence-driven and of an operational nature. The other P-functions are trained to a lesser extent.

- Operational leaders do not have a natural place within the training. To a small extent, they saw themselves as part of the staff functions themselves.
- The exercise in Stavern is a planned exercise. The time-critical transition from line management to staff leadership is not practised.
- The P function staff told us that it was important to practise the communication between the function staff, including situation awareness, in order to be (more) efficient; they thought it less important to practise basic questions.
- The P2 and P3 function staff in some districts wanted greater challenges in order to train the entire “cell”, i.e. assistants etc.

Chiefs of staff and chiefs of police at a more strategic level of the emergency response assessed the use of the exercise based on the principle questions it raised.

3.3 PO and Technical Skills

In the programme description, there is a general aim that after completion of the programme, participants will have the skills in, among others, “using relevant, professional tools and techniques within staff functions” (p. 5). A key tool in this context is the operating logging and information system PO.

The staff members’ lack of skills in PO was a subject that kept emerging throughout the interviews. When asked, what was challenging within staff work, several chiefs of staff also highlighted that PO skills were very poor among staff members. Even some operational leaders told us that they did not have a particularly firm grasp of PO. For example, one operational leader told us:

OL: We have to admit, honestly, that we aren’t the most competent staff when it comes to PO logging and information reception, because our operators are much better at it. We are a medium-sized police district, so we try to let the operational leader have a slightly withdrawn role so that we have 3-4 operators at each time who sit and take all telephone calls and guide all tasks. And they become much better at it than us operational leaders after a while.

The staff consists mainly of people who do not use PO daily, only in connection with the staff functions. Working with data processing systems can be

considered “fresh knowledge” - i.e. in order to maintain and/or develop skills in a fixed system, you have to use it regularly. One chief of staff told us that a lack of PO skills can be a bigger challenge than the incident itself: “(...) *many of the practical staff functions are, in a way, a bigger challenge than handling the incident (...) It's a massive challenge.*” The data further indicates that the number of staff events and exercises during the year is roughly sufficient to improve PO skills. One chief of staff said:

We don't use PO daily, so we have to remember what we did half a year ago when we use it. It has a lot of capacity, but you actually forget about it and instead move physically between the function areas to give information.

One member of the P2 staff told us that he did not trust the PO system, and if it was really urgent to share new and critical information “*then you just shout it across.*”

Crisis preparedness is challenged by a small, serviceable data processing system from 1994. This is an ICT challenge for the police, and is not part of this evaluation's mandate. As long as the police use PO, we believe it is necessary that all participants master the system so that they do not “*have to ask how to use the PO system every time they carry out an exercise*”, as one P2 pointed out. One operational leader experienced that the staff, after the exercise in their own district, had a lack of skills in the PO system. This led to an understanding of the need to learn the PO system better. However, this was solved by using “secretaries” who sit next to the members of staff and log the information in the PO system.

With the Local Police Reform Act, the police received larger operating centres, and with larger operating centres, operational leaders were given a more retracted role, whilst the operators increasingly took over, amongst others, the logging of data into the PO system. A lack of skills in PO may be a challenge and ought to be a subject to reflect on, especially with regard to staff efficiency and notoriety. However, there were several operational leaders who highlighted the importance of the guidance and support from the operating centre. For example, one operational leader told us this:

My point is that the college, in Stavern, is very good at preventing us from coming to a standstill, which may have happened if we hadn't been monitored closely by the instructors. I've learnt a great deal about logging and receiving data, and various other things.

Another aim of the programme is improving the communication between leadership levels. This may be, for example, between staff and PST (Politiets sikkerhetstjeneste: "The Norwegian Police Security Service"), staff and POD (Politidirektoratet: "The National Police Directorate"), or staff and other police districts that have put staff in place (if the incident affects several districts, cf. the Gemini 2016 exercise). Effective communication between such levels of leadership happens through technical tools like VTC (Video TeleConference/Videoconferencing) and telephony. Testing both the staff's technical skills, and the technique itself that ensures communication flow, is essential for staff functions. Therefore, it is important to practise using technical tools within one's own staff location. The evaluators observed a major exercise where use of VTC and telephony was necessary to ensure a common information input and understanding of the situation. The observations showed that communication between cooperative agencies had a significantly reduced quality because the communication technique was not equally satisfactory each time it was used. This also seemed to prevent effective communication between the agencies in a situation where time was a factor.

Some chiefs of staff told us about the technical challenges of ItL. They described ItL as not very user-friendly, and that they had to spend a lot of (unnecessary) time on understanding how ItL works as a pedagogical platform.

3.4 The Chief of Staff as Teacher

The chief of staff is appointed as the responsible organiser, arranger, evaluator, and motivator for the programme locally. *Veilederen for stabssjefen* (p. 4) also lists some general pedagogic advice for the chief of staff, such as, for example, the importance of motivation for learning, positive feedback, focus on meaningful activities, learning as a social activity, anchoring new knowledge to previous experiences, and that all feedback should be justified.

It was therefore natural to ask the chiefs of staff if they found that the Staff and Leadership Development Programme had given them enough pedagogical preparation to be the staff's teacher, and how they understood the pedagogical aspect of the chief of staff's role.

As aforementioned, the staff function is a function alongside the daily line function. There was only one district in our selection where the chief of staff function was well-known. That is, in addition to being chief of staff, the vast majority also had other jobs, and within different functions. To take an example from the data: As a chief of staff, one has several responsibilities, and many key tasks. One chief of staff asked *"How many gentlemen should you serve at the same time?"* We interpret this statement as an expression that the chiefs of staff feel like they are pulled between responsibilities and expectations from several directions.

All work related to staff functions and the Staff and Leadership Development Programme are done on top of other tasks that the chiefs of staff have responsibility for in day-to-day operations. A great deal felt that the programme's requirement of following up on members of staff was extremely demanding to deal with during busy, everyday operations. Some expressed that following up on staff according to the demands of the programme was *"rather tiresome"*, and all of them said that this work was largely done as evening work. One chief of staff thought that *"It's your conscience that makes you do it"*, and demonstrated the culture of collective responsibility *"in order to keep things shipshape."* Despite a heavy workload and evening work, no chiefs of staff complained or expressed dissatisfaction with being a chief of staff. On the contrary, one chief of staff said that the staff work *"is very exciting, so that [following up on staff members in the programme] hasn't done me any harm. But there has been evening work."*

No chiefs of staff found that the programme had provided them with any pedagogical understanding of being *"the staff's teacher"* beyond what they already knew. One chief of staff thought that the programme provided *"some tools to be a motivator. I was more of a motivator who pushed the functional leaders through the E-Learning programme, and feedbacked in relation to the gap analysis, than I was a teaching resource."* He went on to tell us:

COS: I felt that a lot of what I contributed was reinforcing the staff in the same way I do for my own staff; most of what I've used probably comes from previous experience, knowledge, and ability more than from what the staff programme gave me as a chief of staff in relation to the role of teacher. I don't doubt that that was the intention, because it was very clear from the start, that you got some special treatment or more fill-ups of coffee as a chief of staff in order to function well in the role of teacher, that - I already knew when I answered and helped.

R: But in order for you to accomplish the ambition of being the staff's teacher, what do you think you would need more of?

COS: I'm not sure. I think there was a tendency, especially in Stavern where you received a more direct follow-up with regard to the role of the chief of staff; you were almost coached in the chief of staff role in terms of how you actually did the staff work - how you led the staff functions, how you've progressed in your work, how clear you are about things, is this a decision-making meeting or a status meeting, and how do the different meetings work, for example. So in Stavern, I felt that it gave me more security in relation to the chief of staff's execution of tasks, but not in relation to working and being a teacher for the P3 and P4 staff and the like.

In answering what the chiefs of staff wanted to learn more about, the majority told us that they needed more information about the chief of staff's function and how to perform the role of a chief of staff. We interpret the empirical data thus, that the chiefs of staff are more concerned with their actual tasks as chief of staff when crises occur than how he/she can facilitate the staff to continue to learn and develop their ability to perform staff functions.

3.5 Gap Analysis

Gap analysis is a method of ensuring a systematic evaluation of staff work, and should be a tool for the staff's continuous learning and development. The evaluation method is formulated by the programme supervisors. Since the chief of staff is given the responsibility of carrying out the gap analysis, we distinguish between the opinions of the chiefs of staff and the staff members with regard to this evaluation method. First, we look at the chiefs of staff's descriptions on how they helped the staff to carry out the gap analysis, then we present the experiences of the staff members. Finally, we look at the chiefs of staff's understanding of the purpose of gap analysis.

Gap Analysis and the Chiefs of Staff

Everyone, except one assistant chief of staff, told us that the functional leaders and the chief of police were informed about the analysis form and the purpose of the gap analysis. Furthermore, each function's leader was challenged to write an assessment of the target areas that concerned their own function. The chiefs of staff then received the assessments from each of the functional leaders. Several of the chiefs of staff took responsibility for *"sewing these [all the assessments] together in the best way possible."*

There was only one chief of staff who described an active and assertive use of gap analysis. He said: *"We're happy with gap analysis and have used it a lot."* He told us that he first sent the gap analysis out to all staff members and asked them to provide some input - he received some input, but not from everyone. The chief of staff had used gap analysis as the basis for evaluations and discussions at daily meeting for the staff. He had also presented the staff's gap analysis, and what the staff felt were points for improvement, to the rescue services, which the chief of staff meets four times a year: *"And then I got some input from the rescue services about their interpretation of this, and what they wanted, what their needs were, and how they felt the staff were working. This was especially useful during the exercises."*

This experience of gap analysis stands out as the exception compared to the rest of the chiefs of staff's experiences. The majority told us of other, less positive experiences of gap analysis than the chief of staff quoted above did. In one police district, it was an assistant chief of staff who had responsibility for the gap analysis being implemented. The person concerned spent some time trying to understand how it should be implemented.

Yeah, so I spent a bit of time on actually understanding how it should be used, on the layout, so I spent a bit of time on it, so it was actually me who wrote it, and when I presented it, the others said it was fine [as it was].

There were several chiefs of staff who thought the gap analysis form was demanding. Some thought the gap analysis was *"elaborate"*, others said the form was difficult to follow, and not very practical. One chief of staff said: *"Perhaps there are many disproportionate points in the gap analysis, many of the points are*

marginal, and we got rid of them very easily.” Another chief of staff thought that gap analysis was not a suitable tool for learning and development:

COS: Yes. But they wanted it; we’d actually gotten a template for this here, so we filled it out, gap analysis? I had to ask what it was, believe it or not; I didn’t understand what it meant.

R: What did they say to that?

COS: I don’t remember, but I got a template. I used it to fill out the form. Yeah, well, I think it’s okay to focus on your own learning, that’s actually what we’re doing right now, I think it’s valuable, but (...)

R: But for you, this wasn’t at the forefront of your mind; but you did it, and how was it?

COS: What you’re asking now is much more valuable, a little more popular explanation of what we’ve learnt to think back on, but this is a little like (...)

R: Checking up on?

COS: Yeah, being checked up on.

R: So there’s no way you thought you might use this as a work tool next time you train your staff?

COS: No.

Several chiefs of staff described corresponding experiences with regard to how gap analysis was received and understood among staff members. One chief of staff commented on it thus: *“I’ve been struggling to sell it to my staff. I don’t get it myself.”*

Another chief of staff found that staff members did not understand the language of the gap analysis form, and thus had problems filling it out. He told us that the members of staff *“struggle with understanding the approach to the problem. They find that the approach to the problem is difficult; they struggle with what’s being asked, and so it’s difficult to find the right answers.”* The chief of staff thought that the analysis form has a language style that the staff are not familiar with from their daily work tasks. He said: *“The term usage and content are a little strange; we’re not really familiar with the language. It’s not very specific in relation to how the functions work.”*

Most chiefs of staff told us that several of the P function staff did not write an assessment of the gap analysis. They also commented that not all members of staff had done a good enough job with the assessments. Some chiefs of staff also

disagreed with some of the assessments from the staff members, but chose not to censor the inputs. One chief of staff told us “(...) *I could've said that you can just delete that bit there, but I didn't. So I didn't censor it at all.*”

The gap analysis was not only demanding for the chiefs of staff, but also for the programme supervisors who developed the gap analysis. They realise that it will take time before gap analysis has a positive foothold among the staff. One of the programme supervisors said the following:

We have to admit that you need some endurance with the gap analysis form, because, like the evaluation method we've worked with, it's been hard to sell at times, because you need to spend a bit of time on these concepts, like situation awareness, there are many terms and so yeah, what you put in there, you have to have a belief in what you do. When you start, you can't then change your mind at the next corner; you have to stick with it and be a little stubborn. And we are that, that's for sure, so it's good that we can communicate, but you have to be a little stubborn; you have to believe in what you do and stick with it.

Gap Analysis and Staff Members

But what do the P function staff think of gap analysis? During the interviews, we presented the staff's gap analysis form for all informants, followed by questions about gap analysis. The four dialogues below illustrate the informants' immediate response when presented with the gap analysis form:

R: And then we have the gap analysis; what sort of connection do you have to this?

P2: Gap analysis?

R: (Shows the form, explains what gap analysis is.)

P2: Did we do that?

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R: Gap analysis? Have you not used it as a work tool?

P2: Not that I know of, no.

R: But you must have recognised it, since you're a P2?

P2: Yeah, it was a bit like this for me, but who's done this one?

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R: Gap analysis, what do you think about that?

P3: Do we have something like that?

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R: You rated this amber, so medium, about knowing everything in the gap analysis, I don't know if you remember it?

COP (Chief of Police): No.

R: It was apparently the chief of staff who carried it out; it was his responsibility in any case.

COP: Amber, right?

The data shows that the vast majority had a poor recognition of the gap analysis form, and there were some who did not recognise it, had forgot it, or did not understand it. Some explained this by saying gap analysis was something leadership dealt with, and so did not affect them. There were not many staff members who felt that gap analysis affected their own learning process other than they became more aware of things. However, the majority felt that gap analysis was more to do with controlling measures and responsibility rather than contributing to continuous learning processes. For example, one P3 function member of staff told us that gap analysis was a method that ensured systematic evaluation work:

P3: Yes, we've completed the gap analysis, but we've not evaluated ourselves directly.

R: But do you think the gap analysis gave it some meaning? Was it a positive work tool?

P3: Yes, I think so, because you have bullet points that help you become more aware, and it gives you the opportunity to actually write down what we're doing well and what we're doing not so well. And then there's the opportunity to implement follow up measures, and decide who follows up on what, and you can set deadlines, and then I think it becomes a more useful tool than just having a written document floating around, so it's more transparent and easier to follow.

Another P2 staff member described the staff's work on the gap analysis thus:

R: So do you think using the gap analysis form before, during, and after this, has given you a better understanding, or has it just "been done for the sake of doing it"?

P2: Yeah, I think it's more that. So when we have it implemented, it's so to make clear where we have a gap, in relation to the intentions and how we do things in reality. That's what I think when I hear it. And when it's in place, the chief of

staff is clever: we have it as a topic, so things are more visible to us, and then if I get some work tasks in connection with this, I get them directly so that we have to look at it and do something with it.

R: Do you think it's a good work tool/learning tool for the staff? Or do you just "tick this, tick that, and send it back"?

P2: Yeah, probably the latter. Yeah, the latter.

However, one person was happy with the many matrices of the gap analysis.

For example, one member of the P2 staff told us the following:

P2: Yeah, I think so, actually. Or maybe it [the form] is a bit too theoretical, like that, (...) lots to do, many matrices, but I like using it. I've actually written the assessment here, and that's the model I have with me the whole time; I cut it into all the answers, and I try to keep to it. I think it's fine. I like those types of models.

Our data suggests that the gap analysis has not been a subject for discussion within the staff - including trying to gain a common understanding, or understanding the functional leaders' assessments. The empirical data chiefly suggests that the gap analysis has had a controlling function. The form has served more as a control of the staff's situation than an analysis that stimulates reflection and promotes learning. It has worked more as a tool for making the staff aware of general aspects that are put into play through staff functions.

Gap Analysis Does Not Evaluate Relational Aspects

Gap analysis aims to create awareness of several critical factors within staff functions. When asked whether gap analysis does not cover something, the vast majority of chiefs of staff answered that interaction and teamwork between functions are not covered by gap analysis. For example, one P3 member of staff told us:

I don't think gap analysis covers what I think is the biggest challenge, that of interaction, getting people to work together. I meet a P2 staff member like this now and then; we chat together, but suddenly, we'll be sitting close together and cooperating, and it doesn't go well. That's what the dynamic is in crisis management. You have to know each other well, know each other like the back of your hand. You don't achieve that with gap analysis.

Gap analysis does not cover the relational aspects of the staff functions. The empirical data suggests that the Staff and Leadership Development Programme may have a one-sided instrumental approach to staff functions. Since there were several staff members who emphasised relationships between colleagues as both a challenge and a necessity in staff work, one may question whether the Staff and Leadership Development Programme also ought to enable staff to have the opportunity to receive some experiential learning of this aspect.

One chief of staff pointed out that the gap analysis form does not cover communication between the different levels (staff, POD, PST, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security). The gap analysis does not ask about the staff's cooperation with LRS (Lokal redningsentral: "Local Rescue Centre") either. However, one chief of staff has considered LRS in the assessments of the categories: "situation reporting", and "cooperating". This chief of staff expressed throughout the interview that he considered the staff and the staff functions to have a significant correlation. This attitude towards the staff functions may be an example of the limitations experienced by several chiefs of staff, not necessarily in the analysis form itself, but how the chief of staff and the staff read the form.

What Is the Actual Purpose of Gap Analysis?

There were various understandings among the chiefs of staff of the purpose of gap analysis. Is it a tool for the staff to learn by evaluating themselves, or is it a tool for the national experience exchange carried out in Stavern? One chief of staff thought that:

The gap analysis at PHS is about collecting common experiences of how this is done around the country, in order to collect them and push things forward towards a new programme, not necessarily to provide feedback for the participants.

This opinion was shared by several chiefs of staff. They thought that through a systematic review of the forms for each district, the programme supervisors could see where the college is under pressure, and whether there is pressure in the same areas for several workforces. Based on this, they can make changes in the staff programme in order to cover a national gap in knowledge.

We can see that the chiefs of staff have understood the use of gap analysis in different ways. We also see that there is a small minority of chiefs of staff who have actively worked on the gap analysis, pushed their P functions staff members to fill out the form, and presented the assessment at staff and rescue services meetings. There is much to suggest that gap analysis has had a difficult start within the staff, and that there is a gap between the staff's use of gap analysis and the intention of using gap analysis as a base for continuous learning and development.

3.6 Experiential Learning in the Police

As we read the foundational documents *Program for stabs- og lederutvikling*, and *Veilederen for stabssjefen*, they clearly describe how the pedagogic method of the programme will be rooted in experiential learning. A knowledge objective that participants should acquire *knowledge of experiential knowledge and experiential learning* is also formulated (Politihøgskolen, 2014, pp. 4-5). The knowledge objective is supported by an online lesson on experiential learning on ItL.

In light of the ambitions of the programme that participants will gain a knowledge of experiential knowledge and experiential learning, the evaluation indicates that the programme has failed to meet this knowledge objective (see also section 4.4). This was specifically confirmed by one functional leader:

R: The entire programme has the concept of experiential learning as a basic intention. How do you understand the concept as a police officer, and P2 staff? Does it make sense?

P2: Yeah, it makes sense what experiential learning is, but not as a result of the staff programme, or any other course.

Staff Members' Understanding of Experiential Learning

In the following, we will look closer at how the informants relate to the concept of 'experiential learning'. The description of this forms the basis for discussing how the informants view knowledge and learning within their own staff operations.

In summary, the data shows that the informants generally believed that experiential learning at the local level is when the police *themselves* take the initiative to learn from their own and others' experiences. It is evaluating what one has done, asking questions about what worked and what did not, and sharing this with the rest of the workforce. There were several, operational leaders in particular, but also functional leaders in the P2 and P3 functions, who referred to experiential learning as "experience transfer":

I wish that the operational leader meetings we have, which I think happen no more than four times a year, and even then, not everyone is there, would be down there [the operating centre] anyway. The fact that cases, or special incidents, were being gathered, pulls the rest of the gang through it. Both the PO technical side of things and what the outcome of this was, concerning the staff being put in place. It's there you have a great deal of experience transfer.

Several chiefs of staff and chiefs of police emphasised that 'experiential learning' is when previous experiences lead to a new course. One chief of police explained this concept thus: "It [experiential learning] actually means that you may need to change the course once you've learnt and gained experience." Others indicated that "course change" would lead to the development of a new work method. One member of the P2 staff elaborated:

I think that experiential learning concerns, put simply, each individual in the staff learning something about the courses they're on, the theories they study, and the incidents that they're part of. Then you gain a load of experiences, and see that this works well, this doesn't work well, we could've done this differently. But I think that experiential learning isn't actualised before you turn those experiences into a new work method. There's no point evaluating if the evaluation ends with a report lying in a drawer. It's about both maintaining what's working well and building on it, but at the same time being able to change practices, or change - yeah, maybe we have to change the staff composition, or replace personnel in order to correct the competences within the staff functions. And it's only then, I believe, that you begin to talk about experiential learning, when you take those experiences and apply them to a new work method or improve an existing work method.

The P2 staff member described 'experiential learning' in two ways: firstly, as when the individual learns in scholarly forms such as courses and educational

programmes, and secondly, as a collective process in team practices that leads to a new or improved work method.

Other informants stated that experiential learning through exercises should lead to *new routines* for the work methods. For example, one chief of police told us that “*experiential learning is, if you think about it traditionally, when we train, and gain certain experiences, and then we change our routines, and perhaps the way we do things.*” Another chief of police elaborated this by speaking of channelling experiential learning of training into new work methods through formalised *routine descriptions*:

I think the staff courses at Stavern have been great, for me, it's bit like experiential learning being placed in a system, because if we aim to make every single person learn for themselves, then we would never be ready. If our police patrols have to understand the meaning of everything they do, then they're rather limited with what they can get done. So we're quite dependent on working with experiential learning to change either the training, or routine descriptions - that is, it must affect some form of methodology.

The chief of police understood ‘experiential learning’ as something that happens in the police force’s practice community, where someone’s experiences create a basis for changing the way police work. There are many people that constitute a community within the police force, and because of the large number of people who need to learn a new work method, routine descriptions of conduct become more important than police officers understanding the meaning of what they are doing.

In summary, the empirical data shows that the informants understand ‘experiential learning’ as something that happens at the workplace based on training, exercises, and evaluations, and not through theoretical learning. The empirical data points out that experiential learning is concerned with arriving at a *result*: new work methods, new routines, procedures, emergency plans, and new action cards. The purpose of experiential learning is to change the behaviours of police officers.

The empirical data shows little to what thoughts the informants have about the learning process itself, other than that they have to train, evaluate, and make

new routines. The learning process of experiential learning was not talked about, except from one informant who told us that experiential learning is random, and not guided or structured: *“There’s talk of experiential learning when there’s time for it here.”*

The informants’ understanding partly corresponds to how experiential learning within the police force is described in PBS I. Experiential learning is also defined as observable altered behaviour in PBS I (p. 198):

In order to know whether the corrective measures have helped to develop new experiential knowledge, the use of this knowledge during a new incident will confirm whether such learning has taken place. The behaviour must have actually been changed. Learning is often defined as the relative, lasting change in behaviour that is attributed to previous experiences.

PBS I distinguishes between experiential knowledge and experiential learning. It is highlighted that experiential knowledge is insufficient for learning practices if the experiences are not linked to theoretical knowledge (PBS I, p.198). The informants had a great deal of confidence in that their own, and others’, experiences were an adequate basis for learning, according to our data. No one questioned experiential learning as being a limitation for what one learnt. But we did hear one rare statement from a P2 staff member:

So if we only work with experiential learning, then it’s clear that it’s a bit too narrowly built on what you experienced during the incidents you were part of, so I’d also want more knowledge from outside of that. I want more academic knowledge - it’s rather strange to me that we don’t do any decision-making theory or groupthink theory etc. in a staff programme.

The statement above shows an understanding of the limitations of experience in acquiring new knowledge. In order to remedy this, experiential learning ought to also alternate between relevant theories and research-based knowledge. It is also worth noting that the P2 staff member was also surprised that the Staff and Leadership Development Programme did not use any relevant theories that could illuminate other aspects of staff functions other than the operational

aspect. This could be mean that he/she missed having a more academic outline of the staff functions.

If one takes experiential learning seriously (see Hoel og Bjørkelo, 2017), it may also be interpreted that this P2 staff member's understanding also contains a "missing link". If one goes straight from an experience to theoretical reflection, one may overlook what one actually experienced. What did this experience actually tell you? Experiences often need to be exposed to a thorough analysis that may provide a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the incidents experienced. Then the experience can be translated into learning, new understandings, as well as new practices, and work methods.

In PBS I (p. 198), one tries to accommodate how one develops knowledge from experience by emphasising the importance of theoretical and research-based knowledge during the experiential learning processes. "Experiential knowledge must be linked together with theoretical knowledge in order to become experiential learning." Despite asking all the informants about experiential learning and the importance of reflecting on the experiences in light of theoretical knowledge, we found very few reflections on this in our data.

3.7 Evaluation Practice in the Police Force

Evaluations are maintained as a method in PBS I as an important part of experiential learning. Among others, one should learn through evaluations of exercises. Although this evaluation is not a survey of what the participants think about the police force's ability and motivation to evaluate practices, we believe that our data can also tell us something valuable about the understanding of both experiential learning and gap analysis as a basis for learning within staff work. The following is an account of the informants' perceptions of the evaluation practice in the police force. We emphasise that this is not directed specifically towards staff functions or the Staff and Leadership Development Programme.

When asked whether the police force is good at evaluating itself, the majority answered the same as this chief of staff: "No, we're not." The informants gave several explanations that together may illustrate how difficult and complicated the task is. One explanation that was repeated throughout the data was that of

the culture of the police force. For example, several informants thought that the police did not have a culture of *prioritising learning practices* within the organisation:

One thing is prioritising; that's the main reason. There's no culture of prioritising. No, why not? I don't know.

The reason for not having a culture of prioritising evaluations and learning practices may be due to the police's lack of other "cultures", as one informant put it: "No, having a culture of giving feedback, and evaluating within the police force is something that we're not particularly good at." Others thought it may be due to how the police district is organised with police stations and *lensmann* (a leader of a rural police district/a sheriff) offices, often large distances apart, which makes it difficult to come together and evaluate things. And so there is "not a culture of coming together within the district". Others told us that it was difficult for everyone who had been involved in an incident to meet up to be evaluated, because some worked different shifts, and both the employee and work rotas had to be taken care of. For example, one assistant chief of staff said:

Everyone working on these operational things is part of shift work. And we won't hide that there may be an evaluation meeting where you choose not to have the team coordinator in, because he's doing three night shifts and if he comes in for that, then it's a gamble for the rest of the weekend.

The vast majority found that there was not *time* to work on the evaluations during the daily agenda. But when the informants were challenged about the time factor, several answered like this assistant chief of staff: "Sure, we have time for it. It's about prioritising though. If there's enough interest for it then we make the time for it. That's my opinion." This may be interpreted as "where there's a will, there's a way".

Some of the informants told us that the police force is good at evaluating, but not all evaluations lead to *learning*, because the learning points are not covered sufficiently or gone into in depth. It may also be that there is not a continuity in the learning practices by implementing the uncovered learning points during the next exercise. One informant told us thus:

Yes, we evaluate, but I feel that now and then, we should go into more detail about what has worked and what hasn't. And try to have a focus on the next exercise; that last time was what we were criticised for, and now [we] have to concentrate more on this.

Based on the data, we can clarify that the informants found that evaluations were not prioritised adequately, and that the police are less competent at *learning* from the evaluations they do, because no one follows up on the possible learning points. This explains the various cultural aspects of the informants who do not prioritise learning practices in the police force.

If we compare explanations of cultural barriers for learning with double-loop learning, we see that promoting experiential learning in the police force should start with questions about police culture, and what constitutes the culture(s) that the staff are a part of. As previous research has shown us, the culture of the police force is diverse (Chan, 1996). Chan refers to Manning (1993¹³), who has stated that the police organisation consists of three subcultures: “Command, middle management, and lower participants” (Chan, 1996, p. 111). A Staff consists of members from various hierarchical levels, and possibly come from different departments and services, and often come from different professions, for example, the police force, and the prosecution department. This gives us reason to believe that staff members bring different cultures to the staff functions. Research has also shown us that police culture is not static, but allows change, as well as resistance to change (Chan, 1996). However, there is no further understanding of why changes in the police organisation fail, or why learning within it fails without examining more closely the relationship between the police culture and contextual, social, and political aspects that surround the field of practice (Chan, 1996). Chan’s point is that changes or resistance to changes depends on how, and to what extent, *the field* changes. A project that aims to change the culture, without aiming to change the field (social and political structures), can quickly become a failed project.

¹³ Manning, P. (1993, August). Toward a theory of police organization: Polarities and change. In *International Conference on Social Change in Policing* (Vol. 3, No. 5).

The experiences of the informants show that the police force has a way to go with regard to both evaluations, and experiential learning. The informants told us that they wanted more, and better, evaluations. They also expressed a need for, a desire and willingness to learn more, develop themselves, and understand how they could continue to improve. According to our interpretation of the data, there is a great willingness for further learning and development.

4. Discussion and conclusion

The discovery that “routine descriptions are more important than understanding the meaning of what one does”, is challenged by various theories and perspectives. Lindseth (2015) writes that processes of change within organisations can occur in two ways. The first way, and the most common approach, is to focus on the introduction of new routines when practices are to be improved (Lindseth, 2015, pp. 45-49). We found this understanding of experiential learning amongst the majority of the informants. Lindseth (2015) emphasises, however, that rules and descriptions of procedures in themselves do not necessarily promote learning about why practices fail. This point was also emphasised by the informants. Several were critical that the learning points from the evaluations were contained in documents, plans, and action cards, and this did not necessarily promote learning. It is worth noting that this attitude was particularly common among informants who did not belong to the strategic levels.

Handling a problem by drawing up new rules, which aim at changing behaviours, is described by Argyris (1976) as ‘*single-loop learning*’. Single-loop learning can be suitable for simple incidents where small corrections are required, but it is a superficial way of learning, which does not take the totality of the enterprise into account. Single-loop learning ignores the fact that actions, practices, and habits are not just a result of specific behaviours, but also of individuals’ objectives, values, and attitudes. Several national studies (see for example, Hoel og Bjørkelo, 2017; Wathne, 2012) by the police force as a teaching organisation find that single-loop learning is a common way among leaders within the police to handle unwanted incidents and so that questions are not asked.

As aforementioned, some informants described experiential learning partly as changing the course. We interpreted this as a change of practices. Jørgensen (2008) also understands experiential learning as a changing of the course, but she emphasises first and foremost the recognition dynamic of change. A changing of the course entails a changed way of thinking by gaining a different perspective of its practice. One type of course change presupposes that one sees a deeper meaning in what one does. This point is also made by Dewey (2005),

who highlights experiential learning as a reflection of a meaningful experience. Experiential learning for change and development is an individual understanding process, where the formation of meaning is a prominent aspect.

Single-loop learning is a form of learning that does not aim towards learning through reflection and the formation of meaning, but through routine descriptions, and procedures (Lindseth, 2015). Experiential learning as single-loop learning is, in reality, not learning from experiences. Learning happens through critical reflections of experience, and new routine descriptions do not necessarily challenge reflections that promote learning.

Lindseth (2015) writes that grasping the experience in itself is the other way one can relate themselves to processes of change. By looking closely at experiences, one can question what the experiences concern, reflect on them, and discuss them before concluding or passing a judgement on practices (Lindseth, 2015). The questions about experience have to go deeper than questions about “what works and what does not work”. Experiential learning that aims at understanding underlying causes, must initially show understanding rather than conclusions.

Questions that touch upon the objectives, motivations, values, norms, and attitudes among employees of experiences, can be described as ‘*double-loop learning*’ (Argyris, 1976). With double-loop learning, one can achieve nuanced insights and understandings that can help the practice community achieve a binding understanding of the underlying causes of failures, or of other reasons needing to be changed. Such causes are often about cultures and practices that are taken for granted, but may also be about more structural aspects of an organisation. Such experiential learning requires processes that presuppose dialogues characterised by openness, and critical reflections. Double-loop learning is particularly suitable in processes of change that involve practice communities where communication, relations, and interactions are crucial to the work, and where questions about discretionary assessments are important.

If single-loop learning becomes the rule instead of the exception for how leaning in the police force takes place, one is at risk of making an instrumental mistake - especially when it concerns team practices where interaction is necessary to execute the operation. The police force's staff and emergency work is a type of operation where the quality of the relations between, among others, members of staff and operational leaders can have a crucial significance for how successful an action is. Good relations and information is crucial in order to make the approximately correct choices in time-critical situations.

4.1 Has the Programme Increased Your Knowledge of Experiential Learning?

Returning to the question of whether the programme has provided the participants with a knowledge of experiential knowledge and experiential learning: None of the informants thought that they had learnt something about the subject that they did not know before. However, it is interesting to see the informants' understanding of the subject in light of both PBS I, and the discussions above. If we compare the findings of experiential learning as a lasting change in behaviour, the findings show that the majority understood experiential learning as the form of learning described in PBS I. However, the informants do not consider it important to link experiences with theoretical knowledge in order to learn, such as the description in PBS I emphasises.

If we compare the findings concerning the interpretation of experiential learning as the changing of behaviours based on new routines and procedures, we see that this is in line with single-loop learning. But at the same time, the empirical data shows that the individual service providers wanted to develop themselves in order to gain an even better understanding of staff and crisis leadership. They requested evaluation work in their own district to analyse incidents to a greater extent. Very few of our informants considered staff training as an *educational programme*. Staff functions are effective and well-developed through training, so the informants do not see the benefit of "theorising" the staff training to a greater degree than it already is. There were extremely few, if any, who spoke of experiential learning in line with double-

loop learning, a learning process where participants are more fully involved in binding reflections on underlying factors such as, for example, informal norms, values, cultures, objectives, and motivations (Argyris, 1976).

4.2 The Overall Ambition of the Programme

As an extension to the discussion above, there is reason to ask whether the overall ambition of the programme has been reached. The ambition is to enable staff themselves, through experiential learning and evaluations (gap analysis), able to pursue further learning and development of staff work after completion of the programme: "With this, it is stated that there is a key aim to make the staff and leadership resources maintain themselves, and further develop individual and overall abilities after the end of the programme" (Politihøgskolen, 2014, p. 3).

We believe such an ambition assumes that participants have a knowledge and understanding of systematic experiential learning and management of learning practices. The evaluation shows that the programme *facilitated activities that promoted* experiential learning - and the informants found that they had learnt a great deal about staff functions. However, did the participants acquire *knowledge* of experiential knowledge and experiential learning, which will enable them to conduct learning practices on their own? Has the programme achieved this goal? This is an empirical question that this evaluation has not been able to assess. However, the findings presented above gives us reason to believe that the participants have not necessarily acquired new knowledge about developing staff functions through *systematic experiential learning* that sets them up for further processes of change and improvement. However, learning assumes that the learner is motivated to learn and develop themselves. For example, one informant told us that he "(...) *wanted more academic knowledge all the time. But that's not the only thing you can apply to a course for.*"

4.3 Motivated for Further Learning?

Throughout our interviews, there was a clear desire to learn, to discuss the subject, and to develop one's function in a systematic way that promotes the meaning of what one does. For example, one operational leader told us thus:

It [experiential learning] isn't prioritised (...) Of course, I can sit down when I arrive at work and read the logfile, and you can learn something from it, but when you discuss it, it becomes something completely different. Why did you choose to do it like this? I see it's like that on the logfile, but why? You get a much deeper knowledge of it.

The operational leaders felt somewhat unfairly treated when they did not participate in the entire programme, but only part of it, and during the staff exercises. The operational leaders wanted to be a bigger part of the staff's development processes, as well as in activities that happened outside of the exercises. We recommend that the operational leaders are included in the programme on equal footing with the other staff members, and that the chief of staff receives a special task with regard to ensuring that operational leaders have a good framework for participation.

As aforementioned, several of the informants asserted that the police force evaluates itself too rarely, and that the evaluations do not go into sufficient depth - something that prevents staff getting to the root of a problem. One functional leader told us that he "(...) *missed proper experience transfer and evaluation.*" The Staff and Leadership Development Programme is remedying this need for the majority of participants. The functional leaders wanted to train even more often, have more exercises, but less extensive cases.

In the exercises linked to staff functions, the individual staff function is continuously guided by the programme supervisor. The exercises end with an evaluative conversation with the programme supervisors. All informants thought this dialogue and close following-up was the strength of the programme.

Having the programme supervisors closely linked to the staff provides positive learning, and further motivation to learn. The staff are helped to structure the

learning process with collective, “here and now” feedback on what worked and what did not. The fact that the members of staff were motivated to learn may be a result of the programme supervisors’ pedagogic approach. They have based the programme on dialogic and constructivist teaching principles. This form of teaching helps the learning to be meaningful, and gives the participant motivation for further learning.

4.4 Does the Programme Promote Development of Staff Work at a Systematic Level?

One of the ambitions of the programme is to promote learning at a systematic, national level. In *Program for stabs- og lederutvikling* (“Programme for Staff and Leadership Development”) (p. 3), it states, among other things:

Learning and development must be seen in close connection with the leadership dimension. The documentation and practices of the programme provide a good opportunity to follow the status and development of the crisis management capacity within police districts, individually, and collectively. For example, the exercises may work as a dynamic form of supervision. Overall, the programme offers a basis for qualified signs of leadership regarding this part of emergency response.

The data shows that the Staff and Leadership Development Programme has not only been training for the staff, but the form of learning - especially the dynamics and reciprocal communication between the programme supervisors and the police districts - has also helped the programme become a national body for experiential learning and development. The chiefs of staff unilaterally raised the importance that the programme supervisors also possess a national insight and knowledge of how staff functions are executed in the different districts. This knowledge enables them to turn to the learning points that are communicated. One chief of staff told us:

They [the programme supervisors] receive input from many areas, and can bring with them the experiences of everyone who has participated [in the programme] before. And that’s their strength, isn’t it? That although we can tell them how we do it, and what our experiences are, we’re faced with the fact that there are

others who do it differently. It's nice that PHS has this [training], so they can make use of nationwide experiences.

The staff gain new perspectives on how staff functions can be carried out, through an insight into the staff practices of other districts. As one chief of staff commented: *"Through this, the staff are led to certain thought processes, which are necessary for developing practices."*

Many of our informants requested a formalisation of "the mentoring scheme". During major national exercises, some staff had a mentor from another district (who had actively participated in the previous year's national exercise). The mentoring scheme and the collaboration provided learning in both directions, according to the experiences collected. The mentors gave good advice, but also received an important reiteration of the experiences they had gained before. Being in a supervisory position, the mentors had to systematise their experiences in a way that was transferable. We recommend that such a mentoring scheme is formalised as it is a good initiative for experiential learning at a national level.

The chiefs of staff emphasised how the programme, and the dialogue between the police districts and programme supervisors, have promoted a national standard of staff work. The data points out that the programme supervisors not only have a practised training at the individual level and collective, organisational level, but that the form of learning has also promoted experiential learning at systematic level.

5. The Programme Must Continue!

R: Should PHS continue with the Staff and Leadership Development Programme?

COS: Yes, definitely. I think it's extremely important to have 12 police districts that run it the same way. And I think the concept PHS has now made, with splitting things up between Stavern and the local districts where PHS is situated, the online programme; I think the composition of all these things is really, really excellent. You're put in place to develop as a group, and as an individual, and you have the opportunity to actually go over and check things.

The chief of staff's statement above, was shared by everyone who was interviewed in connection with the evaluation. Although there was less enthusiasm amongst the operational leaders, there was a clear opinion that this had been a successful programme, and a programme that should continue at intervals of every other year in order to maintain the continuity in the development of staff functions.

Some thought that the programme should also train more police officers within the same function, and not just rely on an "A-team". There is a need to train staff functions more within a police district both because there is a natural turnover due to retirement, and because staff functions in the future, can, and will, quickly extend over a long period of time. Thus, it is important to have more competent people in a district that can cover various staff functions.

Few of our informants had considered the possibility of converting the Staff and Leadership Development Programme into a formal educational programme with ECTS credits. However, some informants thought that the programme could be part of the foundational leadership programme at the Norwegian Police University College, as this P2 staff member reflected:

Yeah, I actually think that these P-functions are leadership roles. And of course, you should look at whether this will continue to be a training programme, or whether it'll also be an educational programme. Yeah, maybe it will. However, I'm a little reluctant to change it from what it is, i.e. the practicality, and the proximity to it being a sort of development programme that is carried out in conjunction with others. But if it could be one part of an educational

programme, or linked to an educational course, then I think that it would be a clear advantage to have another competence added to it, leadership training as a basis, because that's how I look at the P2 role, I see it as a leadership role, and that's actually what I do, day in and day out.

More than ever, the various functions have gained responsibility for larger and larger cells - especially concerning the P2 function. As the staff has evolved, it has become clear that it is not just the chief of staff who leads the staff work, but also certain P function staff members who assume the ability to lead others. Based on this, we can agree that to be P2 and P3 staff is to execute a leadership role, and a formalised educational programme ought to be considered within which leadership is focused on.

A challenge of transforming a practice-oriented programme like this to an educational programme with ECTS credits may be the loss of proximity to the field of practice, and staff functions in practice. It is a question of whether the Norwegian Police University College can, or should, develop a staff leadership educational programme with ECTS credits that takes care of both the proximity to the field of practice, and the pedagogic approach of the programme.

Should the programme continue in its present form? Yes, for the staff, the rescue services, and other cooperating agencies, the programme should continue in its present form. However, the chief of staff, and the P2 and P3 staff members (these can both support as assistant chiefs of staff) should also be offered a leadership educational programme that emphasises, in particular, leadership of experiential learning and development of staff functions. Among these, a pedagogical insight into organisational development, organisational structure, as well as organisational culture, will be key topics to introduce. An educational programme concerning leadership should focus on how chiefs of staff can facilitate organisational learning in the police force as much as possible. Managing experiential learning should be on the daily agenda to a greater extent; what does leading the learning within the police force involve?

Everyone we interviewed found that they had developed into better staff members, and they thought that they had become better at leading their

departments when crises occurred. One should consider adding aspects into the exercises that put more pressure on the function staff, and subsequently challenge a reflection of their own reactions to pressure, and their impact on staff. An educational programme that aims to improve staff work should also have assignments that promote a knowledge of the individual staff member's ability to communicate decisions in pressurised situations. We believe that an educational programme may, to a larger extent, contribute to this more than a programme that is engaged with training the staff together.

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Politihøgskolen

Slemdalsveien 5
Postboks 5027, Majorstuen
0301 Oslo
Tlf: 23 19 99 00
www.phs.no