



Creating a Close Protection Standard Operating Procedure Manual

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The objective of this thesis was to produce a close protection standard operating procedure manual for the client to improve their close protection capabilities. This thesis report presents the data collection and the development of the manual. The client of this thesis was a private security company operating in Finland that wishes to remain anonymous.

The data collection methods used to determine the topics of the manual were participant observation and unstructured interviews with experts, novices and company management. In total 12 interviews were conducted. Observation took place on the client's close protection assignment and spread out over multiple days. The gathered data was analyzed by using content analysis. The content analysis produced a list of 32 topics from which 26 were included in the first draft of the manual. The topic selection is presented in this report. The content for the chosen topics was produced in focus group interviews.

All identified topics are presented in this thesis and include but are not limited to key concepts and abbreviations, roles and responsibilities, on foot procedures, vehicle procedures and driving, and evacuation. The manual was never put into use at the client company, but it was acquired for training use by other entities.

Keywords: close protection, security, standard operating procedures, manual

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1 Introduction

This thesis started because I was asked to participate on a close protection assignment of the client company of this thesis, as the company was lacking experts. Me and some of the more experienced colleagues noticed real deficiencies with the close protection know-how on multiple levels of the service. There were also procedural and material oversights we discovered. As my thesis was topical, the need for development was obvious and the subject part of my expertise, I contacted the supervisor and suggested I would do my thesis for the company and make a close protection standard operating procedure manual, which could, for example, be provided to the new members of the team to be studied before participating in any given close protection assignment.

The objective of this thesis was to develop the close protection capabilities of the client company by producing a close protection standard operating procedure manual for them. The client company is a private security services provider in Finland that wishes to remain anonymous and therefore will not be introduced further. The standard operating procedure manual is meant to be used to give basics of close protection to employees participating in a close protection assignment for the first time, to be referred to when in doubt, and to serve as a training tool in general. The manual can be used by instructors or studied independently by employees. The manual also ensures in part that the employer respects the Occupational Health and Safety Act by providing the employees with guidance upon taking on a new assignment.

The development of the company's close protection procedures, materials and training is essential not only for efficient and professional operations but because the Occupational Health and Safety Act obligates the employer to give the employee sufficient orientation to the work, working methods and safe practices especially before beginning a new task or a change in duties (Occupational Health and Safety Act 738/2002). Clear tasks, duties, expectations and competence to perform according to these expectations are also a critical factor in well-being at work (The Centre for Occupational Safety 2022).

2 Close protection

This chapter presents some key concepts of close protection and Finnish legislation concerning close protection. Reviewing key concepts is intended to help the reader understand this report. The key concepts of this thesis are “close protection”, “close protection officer”, “security”, “very important person” (VIP), and “the client” and are presented from most general or broadest to most specific. The introduction to legislation regulating private security services and, as a result, close protection, is meant to help the reader understand the significance and the dominating role of the legislation when operating procedures are developed for close protection.

2.1 Key concepts

When personnel security and close protection is discussed, the word security should be defined. Security is a complex concept and in the context of close protection three different definitions of security are important. Firstly, security refers to the activities involved in protecting a person against attacks and dangers. Secondly, security can be viewed as a state where threats have been identified and measures are in place to mitigate them. Thirdly it refers to a subjective sense of security and specifically the sense of security of the person being protected. (Sanastokeskus 2017, 16).

Finnish legislation uses the term “personal guarding” when referring to “guarding a person’s inviolability” (Private security services act 1085/2015). Protecting a person is known by many terms such as VIP protection, bodyguarding, personal security detail and executive protection (IATE 2022). In this thesis the term close protection will be used. Simply put, close protection refers to protecting a designated person’s or persons’, often referred to as the VIP or the principal, life, health, reputation, privacy, way of life and integrity in general (Schneider 2009, 64). Schneider (2009, 3) summarizes close protection as “carrying out of all necessary activities by a team or individual to ensure the safety, comfort, and peace of mind of a principal”.

Close protection in the private sector in Finland is performed by close protection officers (CPO) who are people certified as guards on a close protection assignment. Guard certification can be obtained by a person who is 18 but under 68 years old, who is known to be honest and dependable and whose personal characteristics make them suitable for the job and has completed basic guard training or temporary guard training (Private security services act 1085/2015). Often, to be employed as a close protection officer, additionally to aforementioned, a close protection officer training course is a minimum requirement. Close protection assignment as determined by private security services act (1085/2015) is a guarding assignment where the integrity of a certain person is protected.

The word bodyguard is often used to describe close protection officers as for example in the Private security services act (1085/2015) and especially the VIP's personal protection officer (PPO) for which it is in some contexts of the field used as a synonym as for example Schneider does in his master's thesis (2005, 9). Close protection officer or operative is a broader term that includes all roles a close protection team member can assume (Schneider 2005, 9). The term bodyguard is also often used to describe untrained muscle (Aitch 2022, 38) who react to a threat whereas Close protection officers employ a preventative approach where coming face to face with the threat is a failure in itself (Schneider 2005, 200).

The client is the party who pays for and handles the contract formalities of the close protection services on the protectee's side. VIP is the person receiving the service i.e., being protected. The client and the VIP can be the same person (Schneider 2005, 247). The client can also be the employing organization of the protectee and personnel security is one of the nine areas of the corporate security model of the confederation of Finnish industries. One aspect of personnel protection presented by the corporate security model is under special circumstances, the protection of key personnel using close protection (EK 2016, 5).

Standard operating procedures or SOP's are determined by the United states environmental protection agency (EPA 2007, 1) as "a set of written instructions of a routine or a repetitive activity followed by an organization. NATO (NATOTerm 2020) defines SOP's as "a set of instructions applicable to those features of operations that lend themselves to a definite or standardized procedure without loss of effectiveness". In layman's terms and in the context of this development project a standard operating procedure is a procedure, meaning a written set of steps -specific to the client company's operations- that describes the activities necessary to complete a specific task in accordance with the organization's regulations and standards. To oversimplify, SOP's are "how to" instructions. The detail of these instructions depends on the leeway in the task being executed and the skill of the executioner. The SOP should provide adequate information to keep performance consistent without making the task impractical.

2.2 The close protection industry

This thesis discusses close protection in the private sector in Finland. The private Security Services Act (1085/2015) defines private security services as: guarding services, security steward services and security installation services. The private security sector, however, is much larger and there are many companies offering security related products, solutions, training and services that do not fall under the aforementioned. Many companies also have internal security organizations. As Hautamäki (2016, 1) states, the lines between private and public security services have become blurred and the private security sector increasingly complements the public security services of the police and other authorities. This is not solely

due to the lack of resources, but also due to the diversity of the necessary and demanded services. The need for services has increased not only as threats increase and diversify, but also as security awareness increases (Hautamäki 2016, 3).

Private close protection in Finland is a small-scale subcategory of private security sector and more precisely part of personnel security. Official close protection is a part of guarding services and, at least in part, exists to complement the services of police and other authorities. Ideally private sector would therefore work in cooperation with the authorities, but as one of the experts said: “Private close protection is a fairly new phenomenon in Finland. As a law enforcement, such as police and defense forces activity, it has a longer history. Our legislation should be updated to meet the needs of the modern industry, because currently the co-operation between law enforcement and the private sector is practically impossible and is based on unofficial channels of communication and personal relationships” (Interview 5 2023. personal communication).

An important remark regarding close protection is that contrary to the perhaps prevailing public impression, close protection isn't glorious and violent gunfights and car chases portrayed in the movies. In reality, well planned and well executed close protection operations consist mainly of logistics and long hours of standing vigilantly by. To quote an experienced close protection colleague: “It'd be a hell of a lot cooler if we didn't do it right” (Interview 2 2022. personal communication).

It's important to understand that although there exist universally standard concepts, there are many different schools of close protection and the methods used depend largely on the organization performing the close protection services, the resources available, needs of the client, including the threat, and the operating environment. The information on how different organizations, whether private, police, or military, execute close protection isn't usually publicly available information, although many books on the subject have been written. Mainly autobiographical, anecdotal or manuals (Schneider 2005, 60). For the information to be public would not only hinder the effectiveness of the close protection services but it also has commercial value which for example close protection service and training providers don't want to share for free.

2.3 Legislation around close protection in Finland

Finnish laws and regulations set the criteria and powers for close protection in Finland. Mainly The Private Security Services Act (1085/2015), The Police Act (2011/872), The Public Order Act (612/2003), The Constitution of Finland (731/1999), The Criminal Code of Finland (39/1889) and The Coercive Measures Act (806/2011) affect the close protection groundwork

in Finland and therefor guide largely this development work. How the aforementioned affect and display themselves in close protection work is presented here.

The Private Security Services Act (1085/2015) Section 22 states that it is not necessary to wear a security guard's uniform in close protection duties. This means close protection can be performed in any clothing, usually however, determined by the client's wishes. The close protection assignment can take place elsewhere than in the area under guard as stated in Section 4 of The Private Security Services Act (1085/2015). This means that close protection can be performed practically anywhere, such as for example at the VIP's home, place of work or a public place.

The task of protecting a person's integrity is a guarding assignment, the execution of which for profit, is security business (Private Security Services Act 1085/2015). Security businesses require a license based on section 3 of the Private Security Services Act. Carrying out close protection duties for compensation therefore requires a business license in the security industry. In practice, this means that close protection service may not be sold by anyone other than someone that has the security sector business license. The license can be acquired by a natural person or by a legal person under the conditions of the Private Security Services Act section 71. The licenses are issued by the National Police Board of Finland.

Guards have statutory powers which, as defined by The Private Security Services Act (1085/2015), are denying access, removal from premises, apprehending a person, and performing a security check. These powers give the guard the right, under certain circumstances, to violate the basic rights of a human being. Such basic rights as determined by the constitution of Finland (731/1999) that a guard might need to violate in order to carry out his or her duties, are the right to integrity and personal liberty presented in section 7. For example, interfering with a person's activities, such as catching a shoplifter, is interfering with a person's constitutional rights. If a person resists denial of access, removal from premises, apprehension or security check, passively or actively, or attempts to flee, the guard has the right to use such amount of force which can be viewed justified considering the behavior of the individual subject to the use of force, the importance and urgency of the task under hand, the level of resistance, and the circumstances in general (Private security services act 1085/2015 17 §). The use of force against a person is always a serious violation of the personal integrity of the person concerned, although sanctioned by law. Excessive use of force is addressed in The Criminal Code 39/1889.

It's important to understand the difference between use of force and violence. The term "violence" does not appear in felony titles of Finnish criminal code. Physical violence is punished as assault: " A person who employs physical violence on another person... must be convicted of assault" (39/1889). From the point of view of criminal law, violence is therefore

a punishable act. Use of force includes actions that would otherwise be punishable but are justified by law under specific circumstances and therefore do not result in punishment. Chapter 4, section 6, Subsection 1 of The Criminal Code states that separate provision on the right to use force in the performance of official duties or in other comparable reasons, such as guard duties, are given by an act. This legal section contains a general provision on situations justifying the use of force, which always requires a separate authorization provided by law. In the case of a guard the authorization of the law comes from The Private Security Services Act. The authority of the security guard has been issued on the basis of a reason comparable to official duties, so the law stipulates in which situations force can be used. Chapter 2 section 17 of The Private Security Services Act exhaustively defines the situations in which guards have the right to use force, these are the previously mentioned denying access, removal from premises, apprehending a person and performing a security check. The law also states that use of force is always tied to resistance from the subject person of the action. Resistance refers to physical, active or passive behavior, with which the person tries to prevent the guard from carrying out the mission, including attempting to flee. Therefore guard's justified use of force has three requirements; 1) takes place while on guard duty, 2) while carrying out a work assignment listed in the law, 3) and guard encounters resistance.

A guard's power of denying access and removing a person are tied to the area under guard determined in the contract (Private security services act 1085/2015). Often a close protection assignment does not have an area under guard, although it would be advisable to determine the residence of the VIP as such to grant the close protection officers more powers, the work is most often performed, and threats faced at least dominantly somewhere else. This leaves the guards providing close protection services mainly with self-defense (The Criminal Code 1889/39) as their statutory power to protect their VIP in a direct attack situation.

Forcible means equipment, as equipment for use of force are defined in the Finnish legislation, may be carried on a close protection assignment if deemed necessary by the manager of the guarding service. The word use of force equipment is used in this thesis as it is the globally used term in the industry opposed to "forcible means equipment" (Private security services act 282/2002) used in Finnish legislation. Guards on guarding assignment who have undergone specific training and annual refresher training are authorized to carry use of force equipment, which are used as tools in use of force situations. These are determined in The Private Security Services Act as hand cuffs, gas spray, referring to pepper spray, tear gas or mace, a baton or telescopic baton up to 70cm and a firearm. Use of force equipment are not allowed to be carried unnecessarily and the necessity is determined for each contract by the manager of the guarding services supplier. As close protection is performed in civil clothes, law directs that all use of force equipment must be carried under the clothing in a manner that they cannot be seen by others. (Private security services act 1085/2015).

Close protection, or “personal guarding” as referred to in the Finnish legislation, is one of the three assignment types, among security transport and guarding a site significant in terms of the public interest, when a firearm may be carried as a use of force equipment (2015/2085). Firearm is defined in The Firearms Act (1/1998). Firearms permissible to guards are determined in the Ministry of interior’s decree 20.10.2016/878 as pistol, small-caliber pistol, revolver, and small-caliber revolver. In practice however, the firearm principally carried in training and at work is a pistol with a 9x19mm Parabellum cartridge matching the service weapons used by the police (Interview 4 2023. personal communication).

The decision to carry a firearm on any given work assignment, as for all use of force equipment, is made, based on the threat assessment, by the manager in charge of the assignment who is employed by an actor with a security industry business license. A firearm can only be carried by a guard who has annually demonstrated sufficient skill in handling and using firearms (Private security services act 1085/2015) and who has either a personal work possession permit or a parallel permit for the employer’s firearm issued by the police (Poliisi 2017). The competence demonstration and a written test instructions are given by the National Police Board of Finland in their order POL-2017-1340 on instructions on use of force training for security guards and stewards. In short, in the security guard's firearm qualification test, in addition to completing a theoretical test, the security guard fires eight shots from a distance of 5 to 10 meters in less than 80 seconds, so that all shots fired hit the target the size of an A4 paper. During the gun permit process, police evaluates and approves the persons as suitable to carry a firearm in their work duties. The firearm permit process includes a personal interview, and usually takes months. The permit process ensures that the persons are properly trained and assessed by the police as suitable for the task.

The Private Security Services Act does not define the use of a firearm and the general definition applicable to guards comes from The Police Act (2011/872) specified by the Ministry of interior’s regulation on police’s use of force (979/2004). “Using” a firearm means warning of the use, threatening with a firearm, and firing a firearm. Revealing a firearm and getting it ready for use do not constitute as use of a firearm. Threatening with a firearm as defined by law means aiming the firearm in a manner that the target person, according to general life experience, is in danger of being subjected to the use of the most severe means of force, if he/she does not comply with the order, which is enforced by threatening with a firearm. (979/2004).

Although the previously defined firearm is approved for the security guard as use of force equipment, the security guard's statutory powers do not permit discharging a firearm in a use of force situation as firing would be an unnecessarily powerful means of use of force. The situations, in which a firearm is used by a guard, are therefore entirely limited to The Criminal Code’s grounds for exemption from liability’s self-defense situations. This best

reflects the role and importance of the firearm as a guard's use or force equipment. The guard's firearm is purely a defensive tool used as a last resort by the guard to save himself and others in a situation where an unlawful attack posing a threat to life and limb is at hand.

As the entire close protection operation stems from the principle that the assignment is planned and executed in such a manner that the possibility of being attacked is as small as possible, the situation of using a firearm comes into question practically only in such unpredictable and surprising cases that they couldn't have been prepared for or identified in the planning phase. When weighing the firearm use threshold, guidelines can be adapted from the security guard's firearms instructor training program of the police university college, where it is taught that when defending yourself or others against an attacker armed with for example, a knife or a gun, a firearm is the lightest effective way to stop such an attack. All other conventional means of use of force would likely lead to an unfavorable result in terms of occupational safety (interview 4 2023. personal communication).

3 Implementation and methods

This chapter presents the data collection methods used, their implementation and analysis of the gathered data. The data collection methods used were unstructured interviews and participant observation. The analysis method employed was content analysis.

The purposes of my thesis are to address the lack in the client's capabilities in close protection, the consequent compliance issue with The Occupational Health and Safety Act 738/2002, and the potential well-being at work stress factors created by lack of competence and guidance regarding close protection assignments. The data collection aims to determine the exact content for the manual to best serve the company's needs. As typical for a university of applied sciences' development project, this thesis is functional in nature. The starting point of a functional thesis is a concrete existing task for which a solution is strived for with the thesis. Functional theses are working life oriented, and the result of the functional part is an output, which can be, for example, a concrete product or instructions, as is in the case of my thesis. As functional theses often do, my thesis too has an external client. (Vilkka 2021, chap. 1).

The data collection of this development project was qualitative in nature. As characteristic of qualitative research, the subject was exposed to close observation by direct contact through participant observation (Vilkka 2021 chap. 7), and interviews were considered as interactional situations where the role of the interviewer as a colleague couldn't be removed.

Two data collection methods to identify the areas of operations that need improvement were used; observation and interviews. Observation was a natural choice for a data collection

method as the researcher was working with the company on a close protection assignment. Discussion around the subject of close protection capabilities of the company and its employees was already present and created an optimal set up for the second method, unstructured interviews.

3.1 Observation

As a research method, observation is systematic watching and documenting of the observed, usually in its natural environment, with the goal of gathering information for the research purpose (Vilkka, H. 2006, 5). The word systematic is sometimes used when discussed structured observation (Saaranen-Kauppinen & Puusniekka 2006) but means in this context that the observation and documentation are planned and done for a pre-determined research purpose. Systematic also differentiating the research method from how a person observes a myriad of things every day. Observation is an appropriate data collection method for a development target which focuses on individual's actions and interactions with other people (Moilanen, et al. 2022 chap. 4.3), such as in close protection.

The observation was performed on a close protection assignment of the client company and spread out over multiple days. I had the managers permission for the data collection at work. The observation was systematic and focused on performance of the novice team members in real life tasks and their responses to hypothetical scenarios introduced by the researcher. I acted as an active participant observer. Moilanen et. al (2022) describe the observers role in participatory observation as an employee or a customer. These roles were not an option and I acted as the target's colleague. The observation was planned in a manner that it had designated persons who were observed, the number of whom never surpassed three individuals per one observer. The observation had a clear subject limitation which was close protection although I aimed to collect as much wide-ranging information regarding the subject as possible and therefore the observation could be categorized as unstructured. Depending on the situation the observation notes were either transcribed in detail or in keywords, which later on were turned into detailed descriptions of the events observed. The researcher's more experienced colleagues were deputized to inform the researcher of situations that should be addressed in the notes. This added to the number of observers and provided more data.

3.2 Interviews

The second method of data collection used for this thesis was unstructured, face to face interviews. Unstructured interviews are also known as conversational interviews or in-depth interviews (Hirsijärvi S, Hurme, H 2015, 45). Open-ended questions are used, and the goal of the interviewer is to deepen the answers of the interviewee and build the continuation of the interview on them. Unlike questionnaires or more structured interviews, unstructured

interviews provide an opportunity to discuss the goals of the project and the subject of close protection in-depth, which is likely to lead to insights that could, for example, in a structured questionnaire be left out due to, for example, the person not thinking about every valid thing that should be included on the spot.

Interviewee selection was largely defined by the client organization. The interviewees were divided into three categories: Management, experts, and novices. Management refers to management position personnel within the client company, who are directly responsible for close protection operations or higher up in the chain of command. The aim with the management group was to determine their wishes, demands and views for the conduct and know-how of the employees on close protection assignments. The management group sampling size was small as close protection is such a small part of the client company's operations. The sampling size for the management group was two. The expert group refers to employees of the company with comprehensive previous experience in the field of close protection. The goal with this group was to discuss their views on the minimum competence and knowledge requirements for close protection work. The expert group sampling size was five. The novice group consisted of the client organization's employees with no previous or very minimal close protection experience. The goal with the novice group was to discuss what information they felt they would need to confidently take on a close protection assignment. Novice sampling size was five.

The interviews were conversation-like and relaxed and conducted in a calm environment alone with the interviewee. The interviews were recorded with the permission of the interviewees. The interviewees were informed of the purpose and the goals of the research for them to be able to give consent based on accurate information. The data from the interviews was gathered by transcribing the recorded interviews.

Structure of the interviews was as follows. First, the interviewees position at the company, experience in private security sector, law enforcement background, close protection experience and related training and qualifications were determined. Next, the purpose and goals of the development project, the anonymity and information management of the interview material were explained to the interviewee. The three groups; management, experts and novices had a slightly different starting question which guided the discussion. For management: What do you see as essential knowledge and know-how for the employees to fulfill the standards and expectations of the company for close protection services? For experts: What do you see as essential to include in the manual intended to give basics of close protection? For novices: What information / know-how would you need to feel competent to work on a close protection assignment? The questions acted as conversation starters with the purpose of the development project and close protection as the guiding

themes for the interview. The shortest interview lasted 14 minutes and the longest 2 hours and 27 minutes. The durations could be determined from the recordings.

3.3 Analysis

The purpose of data analysis in qualitative research is to create clarity in the data and thus produce new information about the object of the research. With the help of analysis, the aim is to condense the material and increase its informational value by clarifying the fragmented material. (Eskola & Suoranta 1998, chap. 4). According to Eskola and Suoranta (1998, chap. 4) analysis is the most challenging part of qualitative research and is mainly due to the lack of clear techniques and teaching. I too struggled with the choice of analysis technique. However, the purpose of the data collection strongly guided the chosen analysis technique. It was necessary to get a list of topics that would be included in the manual, and this list needed to be given a certain order of importance and so the analysis technique used was a combination of thematization and content specification. Thematization and content specification are both subcategories of content analysis (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2018, chap. 4.1.).

In thematization, themes corresponding to the research problem are brought out from the material. The aim is to find topics relevant to the research problem in the text mass and determine their occurrence in the material. The content specification, also known as quantitative content analysis (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2018, chap. 4.1.), describes the content of the text quantitatively. With statistical content breakdown, the research question is answered with the help of quantitative measurement results. The measurement used was the so-called frequency measurement (Eskola & Suoranta 1998, chap. 4) i.e. we count how many times something occurs in the text. In this case, the thing to count was the presence of different themes in the interviews. By breaking down the content, the found themes were meant to give an order of importance. To summarize: first, the themes were identified from the text and those presented with different expressions, but referring to the same subject area, were named uniformly under one theme. After that, the frequency of themes per interview was calculated, i.e. in how many different interviews did the same theme appear.

4 Results

The findings of the data collection and the subjects chosen for the manual are presented in this chapter. The subjects chosen consist mainly of the repeating themes that were identified by analyzing the data provided by the interviews and the observation. In total 32 themes were identified of which 26 were chosen to be included in the first version of the manual. All themes were deemed important but due to the extent of certain subjects or the lesser significance of others, they were left out so the first version of the manual could be produced for evaluation. The manual will continue to be developed, the missing subjects added, and others complemented. “Venue security” and “residential security” topics, although high in occurrences in the interviews, were left out of the first draft of the manual due to several reasons. Firstly, they were of lesser significance to the client of the thesis. Secondly, they are broad subjects which would have made the manual longer than intended and prolonged the release of the first draft. Thirdly, being such usual assignments in the private security sector, no lack in knowledge was observed in the field. “International setting” topic was not included for the simple reason that the manual aims to instruct with close protection in Finland and discusses for example Finnish legislation in regard to close protection. The “cancellation clause” was thought to be unnecessarily advanced and something that the client doesn’t wish the newer employees to think about while on assignment. “Post incident / AOP” luckily wasn’t observed on the field which obviously would have been a major failure on the details part. This topic is closely tied with “law enforcement cooperation” and both were not included because, as discussed in the close protection and the conclusions and reflections chapters, no official procedures for cooperation between law enforcement and the private sector close protection exists.

The chart labeled as table 1. presents the themes identified from the interviews and whether or not the observation revealed lack in the subject area. The chart consists of rows divided into four columns. The first column presents the identified theme. Second column presents the number of interviews where said theme appeared out of all twelve interviews. The third column presents if said theme was observed as a subject with shortcomings or lack of knowledge in the field. The fourth column indicates whether the theme was included in the manual. After the table 1., all the themes are briefly explained to the reader.

Theme	appearance in interviews (X / 12)	observed (yes/-)	included (X / -)
Key concepts and abbreviations	12		X

Roles and responsibilities	12		X
On foot procedures	12	yes	X
Vehicle procedures and driving	12	yes	X
Evacuation	11	yes	X
Residential security	10		
Venue security	10		
Statutory powers	8	yes	X
Equipment	8		X
Planning	5	yes	X
Protocol	5	yes	X
Advance	5	yes	X
Recon	5		X
Responsibilities of the client and VIP	4	yes	X
International setting	4		
First aid	4		X
Cancellation clause	3		
Communication	3		X
Firearm	3		X
Reputation / image	3		X
Nature of the job	3	yes	X
Confidentiality	3		X

Training and qualifications	3	yes	X
Mental exercise	2	yes	X
Cooper's colors	2		X
Post incident/AOP	2		
Law enforcement cooperation	2		
Relationship with VIP	1	yes	X
Conflict management	1		X
Personal ability to function	1	yes	X
Development of operations	1		X
Knife	0	yes	X

Table 1. Interview and observation data sheet

Key concepts and abbreviations section introduces the reader some of the most common concepts, slang terms, English equivalents and abbreviations of the close protection industry so that they can be used later in the text and that the reader would be able to read industry text and work with foreign officers.

Roles and responsibilities section introduces the reader to the most commonly used roles that a close protection officer might adopt on a close protection assignment, such as personal protection officer and team leader for example.

On foot procedures section gives examples of formations and walking drills which essentially means positioning around the VIP while escorting them on foot.

Vehicle procedures and driving introduces vehicle equipment, driving, seating, convoy driving, procedures when embarking and disembarking and some procedures for emergency and attack situations also known as evasive or offensive driving.

Evacuation and sheltering, also known as invacuation or lockdown, refers to emergency procedures in the case of an attack or suspicion of one about to happen. Evacuation is simply removing the VIP from the threat's reach. Lock down means taking shelter within a strong structure, usually until the threat has passed or been deterred.

Residential security is the protection of the premises where the VIP resides such as his/her home or a hotel. The purpose is to ensure, of course that the VIP is safe while at home, but also that the residence stays untouched while the VIP is away. "No one taking inappropriate pictures, planting cameras, slashing tires, killing cats, stealing panties or whatever..." (Interview 3 2023. personal communication).

Venue security refers to the VIP participating in a venue and presents the planning and procedures needed to ensure the safety of the VIP.

Statutory powers of a close protection officer discusses legislative grounds for exemption from liability, guards rights on a close protection assignment, and gives examples of these.

Equipment section would cover methods of carry for use of force-, first aid-, personal protection-, communications- and other essential equipment and clothing a close protection officer should have.

Planning as in everything refers to deciding in advance what to do, how to do it, when to do it and who does it. Although as Helmuth von Moltke said: "no plan survives first contact with the enemy", referring to unexpected elements that always present themselves in a scale or another, plans allow for all team members to comprehend the "commander's intent" and thus adapt correctly when necessary to achieve the planned outcome.

Protocol in this case refers to etiquette of procedures and behavior with the VIP, lists the most important or -common ones and gives them justifications. An example from the interviews is: "do not touch the client unless you have to." (Interview 3 2023. personal communication).

Advance is simply put a role a CPO can have and involves the mission of moving ahead of the actual protection detail to ensure the route and location are clear and safe.

Recon refers to gathering information usually about a location or a route to facilitate planning and the protection of the VIP.

Responsibilities of the client and the VIP include for example detailed and honest information about the threat and reason for the protection need, giving health information, preparing an evacuation kit, learning and complying with information security rules and learning certain

maneuvers with the protection team. Explaining these rules should happen at the beginning of an assignment, preferably even before the contract has been signed.

International setting refers to working with international teams, working abroad, and working with foreign teams in Finland.

First aid covers the basic MARCHE protocol that all CPO:s should know. MARCHE is a casualty assessment and treatment protocol where M stands for massive hemorrhage, A for airways, R for respiration, C for circulation, H for head to toe and hypo-/hyperthermia and E for evaluation and evacuation.

Cancellation clause is an entry in an agreement defining who can cancel the contract, why and how. In this case, it is a provision in the contract that allows the service provider to cancel the contract at any given time before its expiration date. This would most likely be due to the client or the VIP not abiding by mutually agreed rules or lying about the true nature of the threat.

Communication discusses methods of communication between the close protection team members, reporting and information storage, security and availability.

Firearm section gives an overview of carrying a gun as use of force equipment on a close protection assignment and discusses legislation, minimum competence level and the importance of training.

Reputation / image simply means the image of the VIP which the close protection team unavoidably is part of and has an effect on due to their constant presence.

Nature of the job is, as discussed earlier in this thesis, not glamorous or violent by desire. Quite the contrary, well executed close protection is generally very uneventful and involves a lot of planning and preparation. This is important to cover so that the right kind of people are employed and that everyone understands the true nature of the job.

Confidentiality in the private security industry is set in law but one can blab about their job without actually breaking the law. Close protection work is small-scale and rare, especially in Finland. Due to this and the image created by movies, the industry has a certain "glory" to it. Of those who work in the security industry, many want to participate in close protection assignments, but outsiders may also be interested in the topic, and talking about it will surely get someone a moment's attention in a group of friends or in a bar.

Training and qualifications discusses the legal and general requirements in the field as well as gives instructions on beneficial training for current and future CPO's.

Mental exercise refers to creating scenarios in your head and developing evacuation and other plans for them. This keeps you vigilant and prepares you for possible emergency situations. Adding to a James Bond character Q's famous quote, one of the experts summarized it by saying: "Always have an escape plan... Or two." (Interview 5 2023. personal communication.)

Cooper's colors are a scale created to express an individual's state of awareness.

Post incident/AOP refers to agreed upon procedures that follow for example an attempt on the VIP's life and whether the attacker, who was hopefully stopped, should be apprehended on site or the scene evacuated as soon as possible.

Law enforcement cooperation refers mainly to the cooperation with the police. As discussed earlier in this thesis, the cooperation currently relies mainly on unofficial channels. This issue is closely tied to post incident procedures as the close protection agent in civilian clothes who has just fired his weapon on an attacker is now in danger of being shot by the police.

Relationship with the VIP discusses the nature of the relationship between the CPO's and the VIP which should always be considered a customer relationship. The officiality level can vary but should never be anything but official.

Conflict management is a broad concept but includes for example de-escalation skills and introduces the reader some basic conflict management skills and explains their importance in relation to for example the VIP's reputation.

Personal ability to function essentially discusses the well-being and performance at work of a CPO, what happens to them if they are not minded and ways to take care of oneself at work.

Development of operations means that all operations should be constantly developed and reminds the reader that lulling in the idea that more experienced people have thought about it or it's not your place as a newcomer to bring such things up, is wrong.

Knife and carrying one on a close protection assignment is important to go over as many courses teach to carry a knife. The legislation around the subject isn't unambiguous and one should be aware of the possible consequences and the proper reasons of carrying a knife.

5 Development of the manual

This section presents the development of the manual itself. Two versions of the manual were created. A physical pocket-sized manual with preliminary content and a digital one with the finalized content. The physical pocket manual was created to demonstrate to the client the intended appearance of the manual. Digital version is meant to be, for example, emailed to an employee or used by instructors as training material.

The content for the topics defined by the data collection was created mainly in small focus group interviews with the experts of close protection and a member of the company’s management. Sometimes focus group interviews have two interviewers in order for one interviewer to take part in the conversation and keep the focus on the theme and the other to document the session (Moilanen et al. 2022 chap. 4.2). I did not have this option and I facilitated the discussion, participated in the discussion and documented the insights of the interviews. The goal set for all the focus groups was to develop content for the manual. The defining criteria for members was to have contact with close protection operations with the company. I also contacted a few experts outside the company, for example, a former police officer who worked in head of state close protection and a diplomatic security operative, for additional insights.

The focus group interviews took place in a meeting room setting where I sat down with the experts and the novices in small mixed groups of two to four people to discuss the topics. Occasionally a member of the management was one of the participants. I initially wrote about the subjects based on my own expertise which everybody read and gave their opinions and asked questions and the conversation flowed freely without any particular guidelines and I modified and added to the content based on the session’s insights. Conversations The depth varied between subjects greatly. Some subjects to present even simply take up several pages and others can be covered in half a page. The manual and its content have evolved since the first draft and what the table 1. in this thesis presents and includes more topics, some of which were originally left out. The current table of contents translated into English is presented below in table 2.

- Introduction
- 1. Key concepts
- 2. Cooper’s colors.....
- 3. Mental exercises.....
- 4. Protocol
- 5. Relationship with the VIP
- 6. Behavior and conflict management

7.	Guard's statutory powers on a close protection assignment.....	
7.1.	Self-defence	
7.2.	General right of apprehension.....	
7.3.	Self-help.....	
7.4.	Necessity.....	
8.	Fire-arm	
9.	Gear and clothing	
10.	Edged weapon.....	
10.1	Rescue tool	
11.	Responsibilities of the client and the VIP.....	
11.1	Information security	
11.2	Escape bag / Go bag	
11.3	Health, medication ja allergies	
11.4	Threat assessment	
11.5	Learning and training of SOP's.....	
11.6	Schedule.....	
11.7.	Cancellation clause.....	
12.	Advance.....	
13.	Recon	
13.1.	Countersurveillance	
14.	Evacuation and invacuation	
15.	On foot procedures.....	
15.1.	Formations: 2 CPO.....	
15.2.	Formation: 3 CPO	
15.3.	Additional protectees	
16.	Vehicle procedures and driving.....	
16.1.	General	
16.2.	Convoy.....	
16.3.	Traditional 3 car convoy	
16.4.	Lead car	
16.5.	VIP-car	
16.5.1.	VIP-car seating	
16.5.2.	Embus debus.....	
16.5.3.	About VIP-driving	
16.6.	Follow car	
16.7.	About armored cars.....	
16.8.	Vehicle equipment	

17.	First aid.....
17.1.	MARCH(E)
17.2.	Medical bag example
18.	Communication.....
19.	Confidentiality.....
20.	Personal ability to function
21.	Development of operations
22.	Training
	Postscript.....

Table 2. Manual’s table of content

6 Conclusions and reflections

This final chapter presents further development ideas brought up during the development project, the assessment of the development outcome, and the ethicality and reliability considerations of this development project. In Finland there is a vast development need around close protection in general. There are clear legislative deficiencies around close protection. For example, no other standardized requirements than guard license, exists for close protection. Firearm, which is listed as an equipment for use of force, cannot be used in a use of force situation. The “correct” use of a guard’s firearm is dependent on training materials and standardized practices and hasn’t been specified in the legislation in a way that, for example, the police use of firearm is. Outside of legislation, the cooperation between law enforcement (mainly police) and the private security sector has not been considered at all. An example of this is the complete lack of standard identification, based on which the police could identify a plain clothes guard in a use of firearm- or other threat situations. Many more examples exist, this section however focuses on discussing the success of the development and further development possibilities of the client’s close protection capabilities.

6.1 Further development

Observation and interviews revealed that the lack in expertise does not lie solely on the ground level, but that close protection operations management and contract capabilities are also in need of development. Standardized procedures and forms should be in place to ensure a smooth and successful launch of close protection operations. Contract cancellation terms and clauses had not been considered and reporting, communication and information storing procedures had severe deficiencies.

The manual that was produced is very basic in nature and upon its creation it became quickly clear that to go further into detail in the subjects covered would require considerably more time and would make up a book or a series of manuals. Also, an instructor manual for creating training scenarios could be produced. The manual will continue to be improved but the initial version needed to be released for the client.

6.2 Assessment of the development outcome

The assessment of the successfulness of the development project was performed with the client and experts of the field. All the experts involved in the development of the manual and few outside of the project, such as former police officers and diplomatic security officers, evaluated the manual. The evaluation process, especially with the experts, brought up some great improvement and expansion suggestions. The manual was not acquired into use by the client directly. Interestingly though, entities outside of the client's organization heard about the manual and harnessed it for training use. Even an educational institution has inquired about the use of the manual. Although not in its intended use yet at the client company, the manual was a success. The project as a whole brought up information and insights that helped the client improve their close protection product to better serve future clients.

6.3 Reliability and ethicality

In quantitative research, generally three measurements are used to describe the credibility of the research; Validity, reliability and generalizability. Validity refers to the accuracy of the research (Heale & Twycross 2015) or in other words, the appropriateness of the methods used to accurately measure the subject of the research (leung 2015). Reliability refers to reproducibility of the research process and the results (Leung 2015). Generalizability refers to the transferability of the research findings to other settings (Noble & Smith 2015). Noble and Smith (2015) discuss the issues of these concepts for ensuring the credibility of a qualitative research and present alternative criteria for demonstrating credibility and rigor of qualitative research: truth value, consistency, neutrality, and applicability.

According to Noble and Smith (2015) truth value means recognizing, accepting and taking steps to reducing biases. Consistency refers to transparency and clarity of the decision processes of the research. Applicability is comparable to generalizability and means giving consideration to whether the findings can be applied to other settings and contexts. Neutrality refers to the link between researchers views and the findings caused by the researchers prolonged engagement with the research concept and its participants that should be accounted for. Figure 1 presents the alternative terminology in relation to quantitative research terminology.

Quantitative research terminology and application to qualitative research ⁴	Alternative terminology associated with credibility of qualitative research ⁵
<p><i>Validity</i> The precision in which the findings accurately reflect the data</p>	<p><i>Truth value</i> Recognises that multiple realities exist; the researchers' outline personal experiences and viewpoints that may have resulted in methodological bias; clearly and accurately presents participants' perspectives</p>
<p><i>Reliability</i> The consistency of the analytical procedures, including accounting for personal and research method biases that may have influenced the findings</p>	<p><i>Consistency</i> Relates to the 'trustworthiness' by which the methods have been undertaken and is dependent on the researcher maintaining a 'decision-trail'; that is, the researcher's decisions are clear and transparent. Ultimately an independent researcher should be able to arrive at similar or comparable findings.</p> <p><i>Neutrality (or confirmability)</i> Achieved when truth value, consistency and applicability have been addressed. Centres on acknowledging the complexity of prolonged engagement with participants and that the methods undertaken and findings are intrinsically linked to the researchers' philosophical position, experiences and perspectives. These should be accounted for and differentiated from participants' accounts</p>
<p><i>Generalisability</i> The transferability of the findings to other settings and applicability in other contexts</p>	<p><i>Applicability</i> Consideration is given to whether findings can be applied to other contexts, settings or groups</p>

Figure 1: Terminology and criteria used to evaluate the credibility of research findings (Noble & Smith 2015).

The research process is credible as the development of the methods, the research process and the findings are transparently and clearly described in this report. Unstructured, audio recorded interviews created a possibility for repeated revisiting of the data to check and recheck emerging themes and if needed, allowed the interviewees to confirm the credibility of the analysis. Biases were addressed by diversified interviewee selection and by inviting the participants to review the findings and participate in the selection and construction of the themes. Although replicable, the outcomes of the research are valid in their context in Finland, with this company and in this time. Similar research performed with another company in another country could yield different results. The themes would likely be very similar, but their adaptation and importance would greatly depend on the operating environment. Absolute neutrality was difficult to achieve due to my prolonged participant observation which was naturally based on my views on the subject. Asking colleagues to participate in observation and comparing the themes brought up in observation with the ones brought up in the interviews were designed to atone for this bias. The fact that the client of this thesis wished to remain anonymous, which obviously required that all the interviewees were kept anonymous as well, created some challenges regarding transparency and therefore reliability as well. For example, the interview references used in this thesis report cannot be verified by the reader. This was a challenge, that in order to respect all parties involved, I could not overcome and in consequence the reliability is reduced.

The reliability of the thesis was also affected by the use of reliable sources. The reliability of the used sources was determined by their nature and the number of uses for quotes. In addition to reliability, source credibility promotes ethicality of the research.

Research ethics refer to the generally agreed upon rules in relation to colleagues, the research subject, funders, clients and the general public (Vilkka 2021, chap. 2). Every step of the research followed good scientific practice and research ethic guided by the ethics of human oriented research determined by Finnish national board on research integrity (TENK) to which Laurea university of applied sciences as an organization is committed to.

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Tables

Table 1: Interview and observation data sheet.

Table 2. Manual's table of content.

Figures

Figure 1: Terminology and criteria used to evaluate the credibility of research findings (Noble & Smith 2015).