**PhD Research Project**

Resilience and well-being in a Scottish Police force

**Supervisors: Professor David Alexander & Dr Susan Klein** Director, Aberdeen Centre for Trauma Research, The Robert Gordon University  
  
**PhD Student: Midj Falconer** The Robert Gordon University  
  
            [**Professor David Alexander's website...**](https://web.archive.org/web/20180107094823/http:/www4.rgu.ac.uk/actr/general/page.cfm?pge=42608)  
            [**Dr Susan Klein's website...**](https://web.archive.org/web/20180107094823/http:/www4.rgu.ac.uk/actr/general/page.cfm?pge=42609)  
  
**Summary:**

This unique two year research project funded by The Scottish Institute for Policing Research (SIPR) and The Robert Gordon University (RGU) aims to identify factors which are associated with the resilience and well-being of police officers and their ability to cope with the demands of contemporary policing.

The project has the full support of Chief Constable Norma Graham (Fife Constabulary) and Chief Constable Colin McKerracher (Grampian Police) and the Scottish Police Federation.

The Principal Researchers are Professor David A Alexander (Director, ACTR) and Dr Susan Klein (Reader in Trauma Research, ACTR). Ms Midj Falconer (SIPR PhD Studentship, ACTR) will be primarily responsible for the data collection.

**Aims & Objectives:**

Research with the UK police service has predominantly focused on detrimental outcomes of exposure to potentially traumatic situations and incidents, including its impact on health, absenteeism, and early retirement. As an alternative approach, this project seeks to identify factors associated with the resilience of officers who encounter the challenges of dealing with a critical incident during operational duties.

All sworn police officers below the rank of Deputy Chief Constable from Grampian Police and Fife Constabulary will be invited to contribute their experiences of contemporary operational policing through a confidential online questionnaire, which will be administered at baseline and at 12-month follow up. Participation is completely voluntary and the research is being conducted independently of the participating police forces.

The nature and the purpose of the project will be promoted to officers prior to the baseline questionnaire being available online. It is hoped that police officers will appreciate how important this project is and, consequently, contribute to this large and unique study.

Thereafter, a selected sub-sample of officers who have been exposed to trauma in the 12 months prior to baseline assessment, and who have expressed a willingness to participate in follow up interviews, will be interviewed to enable a more in-depth exploration of potential trauma-related factors associated with resilience and well-being.

It is intended that the information derived therefrom will facilitate the job satisfaction of officers, and reduce sickness absences, and ill health and other premature retirals.

**Publications:**

[**Resilience and well-being in a Scottish Police Force**](https://web.archive.org/web/20180107094823/http:/www.sipr.ac.uk/downloads/Resilience_and_Wellbeing_Falconer.pdf) Midj Falconer, David Alexander & Susan Klein, Robert Gordon University [Entered, February 2014]