

BASIC SWIMMING COMPETENCE OF POLICE OFFICERS OF THE MINISTRY OF
INTERIOR OF SERBIA AS A BASIC MOTOR SKILL REQUIRED IN FLOOD
PROTECTION AND RESCUE OPERATIONS

Bojan Mitrović

Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Serbia Department for Police Education and Training

Goran Vučković

Academy of Criminalistic and Police Studies, Belgrade

Summary: In the course of May 2014 the Republic of Serbia was struck by floods. Police officers of various lines of work make one of the important subjects within the protection and rescue system when we talk about defence from floods. After the detailed analysis of experiences and lessons learned from the participation of the mentioned police officers in protection and rescue operations in May 2014, it was noted that a number of police officers lacked the adequate training required for specific tasks of protection and rescue in emergencies. Swimming represents an integral part of professional training of police officers within the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Serbia (MoI of RS) and it is very important from the aspect of responding in floods. The research sample included 331 examinees from 21 to 52 years of age, classified into two sub-samples, general duties police officers (PON=139) and border police officers (GP=192). Basic swimming competence of police officers was assessed by swimming 50 m free style (the examinees chose swimming style on their own), and the results are shown through average swimming speed of meters per second (m/s). They were tested for swimming without jumping from the starting block. The PON police officers achieved better swimming results at 50 m than the GP police officers (0.93 vs. 0.88 m/s). The results of single factor analysis of variance ANOVA showed that there were not statistically significant differences in influence of basic swimming competence on the line of work (Sig. = 0.066). Taking everything in account, it can be concluded that the hypothesis that “general duties police officers will have statistically significantly better results in basic swimming competence compared to border police officers” is rejected, since the general duties police officers achieved better results in basic swimming competence, but not at the level which is statistically significant. In addition to swimming competence, because of floods, there is also a need for training of rescuers at water (basic and advanced levels), in other words the courses for motor boat operators and handlers (including training in rowing), which has already been included into the system of specialist trainings of the MoI of RS.

Keywords: floods, swimming, police, security of citizens.