

Health & Fitness Journal of Canada

Copyright © 2011 by the CSEP Health & Fitness Program of BC

Volume 4

June 1, 2011

Number 3

COMMENTARY

Dr. Roy Shephard: The Physiological Requirements of Public Safety Occupations

Randy Dreger¹

Abstract

This article outlines the important contributions that Dr. Roy Shephard made to the evaluation of the physical requirements of public safety occupations, and the resultant changes in practice including the development of bona fide occupational fitness requirements.

Introduction

There are a number of physically demanding occupations that utilize some form of physical assessment in the selection of applicants. Two such occupations that have received a lot of attention are firefighting and policing. The purpose of the assessment is to ensure that the applicant has the physical capacity to perform the job safely and effectively. In the process, certain segments of the population are often discriminated against, such as females, elderly workers and small men. Dr Shephard's work has been instrumental in addressing issues of discrimination as they relate to human rights legislation (Shephard, 1990, 1992; Shephard and Bonneau, 2002).

**Health & Fitness Journal of Canada
2011;4(3):7-8.**

Keywords: exercise, occupational physiology, physical activity

From the ¹School of Health Sciences, NAIT 11762-106 Street NW, Edmonton, AB, T5G 2R1
Phone 780.491.3098 Fax 780.471.7463
Email: rdreger@nait.ca www.nait.ca/pft

Shephard and Bonneau (2002) provided an extensive review of gender equality and policing. Of particular interest, was the integration of a relatively new judgment in the area of applicant fitness testing: the Meiorin case. The Meiorin case set the precedent in the world of occupational fitness testing, requiring new "rules" when developing and implementing fitness tests and standards. In addition, their paper outlined the crucial components for the development of fitness assessments.

The Shephard and Bonneau review along with the 1990 paper had a direct affect my research (Dreger and Petersen, 2007, 2008) specifically the examination of gender in developing an aerobic fitness assessment for firefighter applicants. Dr Shephard's (1990) examination of the cardiorespiratory fitness for policing guided my research questions and methodology.

I owe a debt of gratitude to Dr Shephard for his contributions to the area of work physiology and human rights legislation his leadership has helped shape this important topic.

Qualifications

The author's qualifications are as follows: Randy W. Dreger, MSc, PhD, CSEP CEP, CSCS

References

- Dreger, R. W., and Petersen, S. R. (2007). Oxygen cost of the CF-DND fire fit test in males and females. *Appl Physiol Nutr Metab*, 32(3), 454-62. URL: www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17510680
- Dreger, R. W. and Petersen, S. R. (2008). Impact of fire-protective equipment on peak exercise in males and females. *Appl Physiol Nutr Metab*, 33 (supplemental 1), S29.
- Shephard, R. J. (1990). Assessment of occupational fitness in the context of human rights legislation. *Can J Sport Sci*, 15(2), 89-95. URL: www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/2383827
- Shephard, R. J. (1991). Occupational demand and human rights. Public safety officers and cardiorespiratory fitness. *Sports Med*, 12(2), 94-109. URL: www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/1947536
- Shephard, R. J., and Bonneau, J. (2002). Assuring gender equity in recruitment standards for police officers. *Can J Appl Physiol*, 27(3), 263-95. URL: www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/12180318