The safety of journalists: An assessment of perceptions of the origins and implementation of policy at two international television news agencies

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Abstract

Being a journalist today can be a deadly pursuit, particularly for those covering conflict and other dangerous assignments. In 2004 more journalists and other media workers were killed than in the last ten years. While it is impossible to guarantee that journalists will not be killed or injured, kidnapped or detained, a policy has been created to help protect them in the course of their duties. This study examines the perceptions of journalists working for two international television news agencies about this safety policy called the 'Joint code of practice for journalists working in conflict zones'. This policy was adopted in November 2000 by five major television companies including the television news agencies Reuters Television and Associated Press Television News. This study finds that the policy had significant flaws in how it was formulated and how it is communicated, implemented and reviewed. Recognising the existence of unequal relations of power and conflicting interests at play in any policy process, this study stresses that in the case of the journalist safety policy, all stakeholders should have participated in the relevant policy stages. This argument arises from researching the policy document as well as from the point of view of managers, and particularly journalists who work on dangerous assignments, either full-time or on a freelance basis for either of the two television news agencies. It finds that while journalists are not generally aware of the policy, they do practice many of its elements as well as a range of their own custom-made strategies to protect themselves. The result is to make the policy less effective than it could be.

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Preface

The profession of journalism has always been one that has situated its practitioners in dangerous places and in recent years it has become acknowledged that journalists are often regarded as legitimate targets.

In the year since this study was started, various organisations and commentators have highlighted the increasing range of dangers facing journalists and their assistants throughout the world, and particularly in Iraq.

My interest in examining ways in which these dangers could be minimised, led me to investigate a safety policy formulated in late 2000 by a group of leading television news companies. The 'Joint code of practice for journalists working in conflict zones' is one of the strategies which has been devised to protect journalists working in dangerous areas. The effectiveness of such a policy in a profession fraught with dangers has long been intriguing to me both professionally and academically.

This study has investigated how the policy is working at the world's two television news agencies, Reuters Television and Associated Press Television News. It is analysed from the perspectives of the journalists who use it and the managers who administer it.

I would like to thank all those who participated in this research. In particular, I would like to acknowledge the patient and stimulating input of my supervisor Professor Guy Berger.

E.S. Venter
February 2005

Chapter One

Introduction

1. Introduction

This study investigates the perceptions of journalists and managers at the world's two international television news agencies, Reuters Television (Reuters TV) and Associated Press Television News (APTN), about the origins and implementation of a safety policy known as the 'Joint code of practice for journalists working in conflict areas'. It also critically analyses public knowledge about the policy and its genesis. It was formulated and adopted by a group of news managers, including those from the two agencies, in November 2000 after an initiative by the family of an APTN cameraman, Miguel Gil Moreno de Mora who, along with a Reuters correspondent Kurt Schork, was killed in an ambush in Sierra Leone on 24, May 2000.[1]

The Gil Moreno de Mora family proposed a gathering at which safety issues would be discussed by senior journalists and news executives[2]. This was arranged by the Freedom Forum's European Centre and a seminar took place at their London offices on 20 September 2000. The family wanted the establishment of industry-wide safety standards for journalists to result from the discussions. After the seminar a group of television news executives formed the London-based News Security Group which drew up the 'Joint code of practice'. It exists, on the surface, to protect journalists who are assigned to cover dangerous news assignments on behalf of television news organisations including the two television news agencies mentioned above. This study, however, examines the deeper issues around the origins and implementation of this safety policy and also around the multiple potential functions of policy in fiercely competitive media organisations and the effectiveness of policy and the perceptions of it amongst all stakeholders.

This chapter outlines the background to this research, the theory from which it draws, its value to the body of knowledge about both the safety of journalists and policy

[1] See Appendix I for the policy document known as the 'Joint code of practice for journalists in conflict zones'.
[2] See Appendix II for the open letter from the Gil Moreno de Mora family.

in media organisations, the methodology and methods used, the analysis of findings and the results obtained.

2. Background

The safety policy was initially adopted by five television companies, APTN, Reuters TV, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), Cable News Network (CNN International) and Independent Television News (ITN) in November 2000. It resulted from the participation by news executives and senior journalists at the Freedom Forum seminar which the Gil Moreno de Mora family hoped would result in the television news industry embracing universal safety standards. The chairperson of the seminar, CNN's Chief International Correspondent Christiane Amanpour led the discussion between invited members of two panels which respectively comprised news executives and senior journalists. She also took questions from journalists in the audience. She said Gil Moreno de Mora's family's aim had been to:

> [E]nsure that his death will live as a lasting memorial so that we can address the obligations of news organisations to journalists who risk their lives to cover this kind of crisis – obligations that include protection insurance, safety training, equipment, support and counselling. These are the basic issues that should be set in stone and are not (Freedom Forum 2000:4-5).

That the family had wanted the establishment of enduring, effective and universal basic safety standards for television journalists covering conflict, was the main motivation for this research. It was inspired to examine, four years after its formulation, the perceptions, particularly of television agency journalists, about how this policy is working for them. (See also Smith 2004:4 on signs that "journalists are losing confidence in their management's ability to address safety coherently").

The 'Joint code of practice' comprises a list of 'safety guidelines', which the signatory news organisations are urged to make mandatory. A group of news executives, including those from APTN and Reuters TV decided after the Freedom Forum seminar to establish the London-based broadcast News Security Group which drew up the safety guidelines. The group went further than the family had requested, adding a clause that introduced two new elements: That dangerous assignments are 'voluntary' and that they

should be undertaken by 'experienced journalists and those under their direct supervision'. The companies also undertook to establish a safety information databank and to work together to safeguard journalists in the field, which role was filled by the News Security Group.[3]

It was decided to focus this research on the origins and implementation of this policy at APTN and Reuters, two of the initial five news organisations to adopt it, because as the world's only television news agencies and direct competitors, they face the greatest pressures to produce news video fastest for their broadcast clients (Hawkins 2002:226). Their *raison d'etre* is to keep the customer satisfied (Brumley 1999) by producing dramatic video pictures faster than their opposition. The competition between the two news agencies has also been increased in recent years with advances in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) equipment. The inter-agency competition and the ICT advances which allow them to transmit video news pictures from anywhere in the world, at any time, combines to increase their ability to cover any dangerous assignment (Pavlik 1996, Fang 1997, Halstead 2003).

Both the origins of this safety policy coupled with the economic demands on television news agencies raise questions about how effective it can be. In the aftermath of the September, 11 2001 attacks on the United States, television broadcasters spent enormous amounts of money covering news in Afghanistan and Iraq, and as the notion of news as a commodity is more keenly recognised (Winseck 1997, in Berger 2000) APTN and Reuters TV are particularly feeling the financial pinch. The agencies must impress their broadcast clients to get them to renew their contracts and this typically means providing them with more dramatic news video, and which is delivered faster, than the opposition agency. In this context, this study asks whether the 'Joint code of practice' serves to ensure that journalists working for the two television news agencies consider their safety notwithstanding the fierce competition between them, and whether indeed their editors also encourage this.

These guidelines, under the 'Joint code of practice' safety policy, have since been adopted, with some variation, by more than 100 media organisations, press freedom

[3] A member of the NSG described it as: "a small working group of major news practitioners who discuss and meet regularly as situations demand. They discuss dangers involved in on ground coverage and what might be done to lessen risks" (Pinder personal communication 2005).

groups and journalists' associations (International News Safety Institute 2003). They also formed the basis safety code of the International News Safety Institute (INSI) a global non-governmental organisation which assists journalists and broadcasters with safety training, equipment and advice. It was established in 2003 by a former Reuters TV Head of News who had participated with other news executives in the formulation of the 'Joint code of practice' in 2000.[4]

3. Value

The value of this research can be found in the reality that while journalists today face increasing dangers internationally (Committee to Protect Journalists 2003, INSI 2004)[5], there appears to be no publicly documented information on whether or not the 'Joint code of practice' actually helps to protect them and whether indeed they regard it as helpful. This is seen in the context of suggestions that journalists themselves are becoming targets, perhaps also indirectly due to technological advances which have made it easier for them to "travel into hostile areas" (Brown 2001).

Another aim of this study is to add to the body of knowledge and insight about the functioning of policy within news organisations. It will also help to illuminate the adequacy or otherwise of, for example, functionalist policy theory which is often presented as an ideal model of policy development and implementation (see Parsons 1995). A literature survey shows that policy issues within newsrooms are a rarely researched topic.

4. Theory

This study draws from a range of policy theory to examine the 'Joint code of practice' and the perceptions of it by journalists and managers at APTN and Reuters TV. It assesses how policy theories and policy models give insight into the news agencies' policies and practices, and how the journalists who work for them view the origin, implementation and evaluation of this safety policy.

[4] See Appendix III for the International News Safety Institute's code of practice.
[5] According to the International News Safety Institute in 2004 "a total of 117 journalists and support staff such as drivers and translators were confirmed to have died gathering news around the globe – 42 of them in Iraq. Two more went missing in the course of the year".

The policy theories are discussed in detail in the next chapter within the framework of the policy paradigms of functionalism, pluralism, power, participatory and chaos. Political economy theory and newsroom sociology are also used to understand the power of competition between these media enterprises and how it impacts on the matter of internal policy. Another dimension which is explored is whether this safety policy is realistic in terms of the potential cost impact on these competitive news organisations (see also, Horwitz 1989, Linden 1999, Golding and Murdock 2000, Mosco 1996 and Herman and McChesney 1997). A discussion of this theory also assists an inquiry into the dynamic of power in the relationship between journalists and their employers and whether this excludes the possibility of implementing significant aspects of this policy.

5. Methods, procedures and techniques

Quantitative and qualitative research methodology have been used in this research, however, the data gleaned from the former is mostly of a qualitative nature. The emphasis on qualitative research in this study is to obtain richer, thicker data (Lindlof 1995) and, to obtain "more sensitive insights" (Deacon 1999:79). The methods used in this study include face-to-face semi-structured interviews and a survey and follow-up interviews conducted by email and telephone when a respondent was not available for a sit-down discussion. Journalists and managers interviewed for this research were based in ten countries, including South Africa where the researcher is based.

The methods used included designing, piloting, revising and administering a list of questions for journalists and another one for managers with a range of follow-up questions based on the respondents' initial responses. A list of criteria of respondents was drawn up in consultation with knowledgeable people in the field.

Since television news agencies do not use reporters (their news is sold to broadcasters who use their own correspondents on screen), two categories of full-time and freelance television agency journalists who work on dangerous assignments were interviewed, namely producers and camera operators.

Full-time journalist respondents selected for participation in this research had to have worked for either agency for a period of at least six to nine months after November 2000 when the policy was adopted, to allow a reasonable period for it to have been

communicated to them and for managers to have started implementing it. Freelance journalist respondents had to have done dangerous assignments for either agency from six to nine months after the adoption of the 'Joint code of practice' for the reasons mentioned above. In practice most of the respondents had worked for the companies from at least seven months before the policy was adopted and for at least a year afterwards. Respondents were selected through either non-random, convenience or snowball sampling.

Eight full-time journalists from each company, roughly 9% to 12% of television news agency journalists who regularly travel to dangerous assignments, participated in this research. Two managers from each agency were also interviewed. This follows the argument that "there are no definitive guidelines" about the numbers of respondents in both quantitative and qualitative research (Deacon 1999:43).

All respondents were given the choice of whether to remain anonymous and those who chose to do so were given the assurance, in line with ethical principles, that they would not be named in this research, or in any other forms of it which may be published.

6. Analysis

After the initial survey interviews had been completed category schemes were drawn up which Deacon maintains "may be more appropriate than any preordained scheme conceived at the start of the research" (1999:79). Most of the respondents then answered more in-depth follow-up questions, inspired by their initial answers and which sought deeper and more detailed answers.

7. Results

This research has found how this policy is being practically implemented by APTN and Reuters TV and perhaps more significantly, how the journalists themselves, and to a lesser extent managers, perceive this implementation. Perceptions gleaned from journalists in particular, cover their views about the policy's origins and in whose interests they see it as having been made. These were sought in the understanding that there is frequently no clear process in the formulation of policy and that it is often the

result of the motivations of a wide variety of people (Lindblom 1968). This study also focused on the perceptions of journalists, both full-time and freelance, about whether and how they were consulted in making this policy and their role, if any, in reviewing and assessing it.

A further enterprise was into how the respective managements communicated this policy within company structures, how they implement it and what provisions exist for its evaluation and renewal. This study also established whether the journalist respondents were aware of the 'Joint code of practice' safety policy, and asked them how it was communicated to them specifically, how they understand it, and whether they perceive it as something that can help them, or if it has had no impact on them (see also Berger 2003).

In addition, this study questioned journalist respondents on whether they had refused dangerous assignments, or if they knew of others who have, and discussed with them whether they had experienced any negative professional consequences as a result of this refusal (see Feinstein et al., 2002). It also asked them whether they had made any other excuses to avoid going on a dangerous assignment, or to leave one early.

8. Conclusion

This research has gathered, for the first time, detailed perceptions from television agency journalists about the 'Joint code of practice for journalists in conflict zones' which was formulated four years ago supposedly to help protect them while they covered dangerous assignments. It has revealed insights and offered recommendations which may contribute to improving safety practices within international television news agencies and in the industry broadly. It has also thrown up unexpected findings and some unintended consequences of the policy the 'Joint code of practice for journalists in conflict areas' as will be discussed in Chapter Five.

The next chapter discusses the literature reviewed and the theories used for this study.

Chapter Two

Literature Review: Policy and the media

1. Introduction

This chapter discusses the debates around policy theory, newsroom sociology and the political economy of news organisations. It examines policy theory in terms of the definitions of policy, the process of policy-making, implementation, evaluation and the impact of policy and discusses how the paradigms of functionalism, pluralism, power, participatory and chaos relate to these processes. It argues that policy-making and the implementation of policy, which take place in social, political, economic, cultural and geographic contexts (Parsons 1995) are neither neutral nor rational processes (Easton 1953, in Parsons 1995, Lukes 1974 in Parsons 1995). Contrary to what functionalists propose, policy-making and implementation processes are dynamic, contested, complex and value-laden (Jenkins 1978, Ham and Hill 1984, Lindblom and Woodhouse 1993, in Parsons 1995).

This study has adopted as its standard for effective policy, the central point highlighted by the participatory paradigm which stresses the value of obtaining the insights of those at whom the policy is aimed, and how they perceive its formulation and implementation (Colebatch 2002). In this regard and because it is accepted that people make their own meaning, it is essential to establish the sense journalists have made of the safety policy known as the 'Joint code of practice for journalists working in conflict zones' in terms of their own experiences. The participatory approach will be discussed in more detail further in this chapter.

Other characteristics of effective policy, and against which the safety policy will be analysed, are that it is clear and comprehensive, that it accepts the participation of a range of stakeholders, that it expresses how and by whom it should be communicated and implemented, that it is capable of being assessed, and that it indicates how it will be reviewed and changed if necessary (Berger 2003).

Another discussion will focus on the paradigms' different analytical positions of policy and which describe different values at work in policy. This study's normative view

of policy draws from various aspects of 'good policy' as proposed by the different approaches.

The following section provides an overview of the debate on policy theory within which the journalist safety policy under discussion will be examined in Chapter 3.

2. Policy debate in the spotlight of diverse paradigms

Noting that policy can be analysed from different paradigms (Berger 2003), this study proposes that an examination of the formulation, implementation, evaluation and impact of policy requires a synthesis of aspects of each of these paradigms. While the emphasis is on the participatory approach, this chapter discusses each paradigm's insights and also their blind-spots.

While it is accepted that there are many definitions of policy, this study recognises that different versions of what constitutes policy are influenced by whichever one of the previously mentioned five paradigms informs the definition. The definitions proposed by the different approaches to policy will therefore be discussed in relation to these approaches.

Policy can exhibit characteristics of various perspectives at the same time. For example, it is regarded, in terms of the power paradigm, as "a vehicle for control" and from the pluralist perspective, as "a vehicle for contesting the existing order and asserting a right to participate" (Colebatch 2002:4). It is further maintained that policy can simultaneously be seen in terms of the participatory approach as a vehicle for empowerment.

2.1 Functionalist paradigm

Functionalists focus on policy as a system which works to harmonise dysfunctions in order to improve the functioning of an institution as a whole. Dysfunctions are seen as opportunities, challenges or problems around which policy can be made (Parsons 1995, Berger 2003) in order to achieve this harmony or integration. Lasswell's functionalist model (1951, in Parsons 1995) for example, argues for a logical process in which a problem is identified and a policy is formulated and then implemented. Policy in this sense, which functions to address problems in, and for, the whole, is potentially positivist

because it assumes that problems can be viewed objectively and that policy can be studied and assessed scientifically.

Functionalists maintain that the term 'policy' can be used in many different ways to describe a range of phenomena. An example is this definition by Harman (1984):

> [T]he implicit or explicit specification of courses of purposive action being followed or to be followed in dealing with a recognised problem or matter of concern, and directed towards the accomplishment of some intended or desired set of goals. Policy also can be thought of as a position or stance developed in response to a problem or issue of conflict, and directed towards a particular objective (1984:13).

The functionalist approach to policy sees it as a practice, a framework, a commitment, a plan, an orientation or a law to guide, that is based on a set of norms, principles, values or intentions, to direct or to govern the action of an organisation, whether it is amongst others, a government, a business or a community group (Colebatch 2002, Berger 2003). Policy, in this sense, is rational, predictive and seeks to harmonise and integrate in order to perpetuate the functioning of the whole.

2.2 Pluralist paradigm

Distinct from functionalism's integrative emphasis is the pluralist approach which draws attention to policy as resulting from the unstable compromises reached after "free competition between ideas and interests" (Parsons 1995:134). This contest of interests takes place amongst the elite, who have access to the policy-making process and who are regarded as being able to compete on an equal footing.

The pluralist perspective understands that policy, which has a range of "competing definitions" (Jenkins 1978:15, Wildavsky 1979, in Parsons 1995), a framework which results from shifting compromises amongst the different stakeholders' interests in guiding the operations of an organisation towards attaining a set of goals. It is further noted from a pluralistic perspective that policy is a "reaction to a challenge" which aims to find a reasonable balance between 'forces of change' and 'forces of preservation' (McQuail and Siune 1986:15). It is also, according to pluralism, a web of decisions "which taken together, comprise a more or less common understanding of what

policy is" (Ham and Hill 1984:12). From this perspective, policy contestation entails a range of tactics from "outright deceit and irrational and non-rational appeals of many kinds, including, at one extreme, organized propaganda and at the other, exploited ties of kinship and friendship" (Lindblom 1968:32).

2.3 Power paradigm

The power paradigm, on the other hand, focuses on the issue of control and influence, with an emphasis on class and gender, and the ability of those with power to exclude issues from the policy agenda or to introduce others for consideration (Bachrach and Baratz 1970, in Parsons 1995). It also pinpoints issues of responsibility and follow through.

The power paradigm argues that "the struggle for power is a struggle for setting the discourse in which a problem is framed" (Parsons 1995:152). Lindblom suggests that when actors cannot persuade each other to compromise, coercive power may be used (1968:34). The concept of power is also an important element in the participatory approach to policy which argues for an acknowledgement of different levels of power amongst participants in the policy processes.

2.4 Participatory paradigm

When analysing policy one should investigate the power of the stakeholders (Jenkins 1978:29) which again turns the spotlight onto the participants in the policy process. The participatory paradigm highlights the significance of the involvement or not of all parties or interest groups in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of policy, as well as their individual perceptions of these processes.

While the power paradigm places an emphasis on the control of the policy process by the powerful, the participatory approach suggests that policy can also be an empowering agent. It recognises powerlessness in consultations about the formulation and implementation of policy and gives insights into issues of legitimacy and effectiveness of policy.

2.5 Chaos paradigm

Finally, the chaos paradigm understands policy as a piece-meal or an *ad hoc* process. It is a valuable perspective particularly in understanding a policy which was not formulated, nor implemented and assessed in an orderly fashion as proposed by some models.

The chaos approach regards policy as being a "disorderly" process, or a "piecemeal muddle" (Berger 2003) which is seen to be made without adhering to the rules on which the functionalist perspective might rely.

2.6 Interpretivist approach

The interpretivist position, which draws from the work of critical theorists such as Foucault (1986, in Colebatch 2002) and Habermas (1984, 1989, in Parsons 1995), was also found to be useful in this study as it proposes an analysis of policy from the perspective of the various actors in the policy processes. It rejects functionalism's naturalistic, rational and positivistic approach to policy (Colebatch 2002) and accepts aspects of the participation, pluralistic, power and chaos paradigms.

2.7 Drawing from different paradigms

While aspects of each paradigm may be present in one policy and the way in which it is formulated, implemented and evaluated, it is particularly useful to look at policy from the perspective of the participants (Colebatch 2002) as well as in terms of the pluralist approach which highlights the roles of different interest groups in the policy process.

The next section discusses models of stages in the policy-making process.

3. Stages in the policy process

The policy cycle is represented by various models, as proceeding through a succession of stages which suggests, as functionalists do, that the process is natural (Colebatch 2002) and rational.

These stages typically include policy formulation, implementation and evaluation which take place in consecutive steps. These begin from the time something becomes recognised as a policy issue until the end of the process, which is arrived at after the policy is evaluated.

While some institutions may set their own timetables of stages for the implementation and evaluation of policy, there is no prescribed time-scale in which to evaluate the effectiveness of a policy although there is often an impatience to declare it successful (Sharkansky 1980). Furthermore the process of evaluation in itself throws up challenges and contradictions which call for changes and improvements to the policy while it is being implemented.[6]

Different models suggest different stages with some proposing a linear progression and others suggesting a cycle where evaluation is followed by a review of the original policy, allowing the process to start over again. It is nevertheless proposed here that the steps in the policy process do not always follow the order suggested by these models. One cannot predict how a matter will become recognised as a legitimate policy issue or whether a policy will develop or be implemented in accordance with the stages set out by some policy models (e.g. Linden 1999). This idea of stages of policy "greatly overstates the rational nature of policy-making and gives a false picture of a process which is not a conveyor belt" (Parsons 1995:79).

Parsons criticises what he calls the "stagist approach" (1995:78) although he accepts that it offers advantages in finding a way to transform the complex policy process into "a more manageable form" (1995:80). Policy-making, implementation and evaluation are, however, accepted in this study as a "never-ending process of successive steps" (Lindblom 1968:25) in which a policy can be chosen "knowing that it is not quite the right policy"[7].

Examples of models of stages of policy-making include those of functionalists Fuller and Myers (1941, in Parsons 1995) and Bossard (1941, in Parsons 1995) and that of the constructivists Spector and Kitsuse (1977, in Parsons 1995). Fuller and Myers' natural history approach sees policy issues as moving through three stages: recognition, policy-making and finally implementation (1995:98). It was later expanded by Bossard into a 12-stage model which defined the process of making policies from the

[6] Grindle notes that: "Feedback from implementation procedures may lead to modifications in policy goals and directions; or demand that rules and guidelines be interpreted or reinterpreted may lead to a considerable amount of policy making at the side of implementation" (1980:8).

[7] While this insight belongs within a chaos paradigm, a functionalist character appears in Lindblom's remark that this understanding "leaves open the possibility of doing better in the next step" (1968:25).

identification of a policy issue to changes in techniques, concepts and personnel (1995:98-9).[8]

This model was later modified to include a constructivist perspective on the identification of policy issues and on the impact of implementation (Spector and Kitsuse 1977, in Parsons 1995). It examines policy in terms of the manufacture of meaning in political and institutional contexts.[9]

These stagist models of the policy process, whether they are presented in a linear or cyclical form are criticised by Van Audenhove (2003) who argues that they create "an artificial idealistic view" of policy as predictable and which suggests that the policy process *will* follow the suggested stages. It is further noted that policies are not always made with the aim that they will be effectively implemented or for that matter, even implemented at all (Sharkansky 2002).

Rather than conforming to set stages and including the possibility that policy will not be implemented, the process can better be described as:

> A set of interrelated decisions taken by a political actor or a group of actors concerning the selection of goals and the means of achieving them within a specified situation where these decisions should, in principle, be within the power of these actors to achieve (Jenkins 1978:15).

This chapter maintains, along with Jenkins (1978), Parsons (1995), and Van Audenhove (2003) that it is unrealistic to expect policy-making to conform to models which prescribe stages setting out goals to be attained as they ignore the fact that there may be "multiple goals which overlap and frequently contradict each other" (Colebatch 2002:51), and furthermore, these goals may not be easily identifiable. In addition, stages

[8] These steps are: the recognition of a problem; a discussion of its seriousness; attempts at reform; suggestions for a more careful study; change in personnel among interested people; emphasising broad, basic factors; dealing with individual cases; another change in personnel; inductively arriving at a programme; refining techniques of study and treatment; refining concepts and another change in personnel (Bossard 1941, in Parsons 1995:98-9).

[9] Spector and Kitsuse's four-stage model includes in Stage One, the assertion by a group or groups of a condition they regard as "offensive or harmful or undesirable". Stage Two is when these groups become recognised as legitimate by officials in authority; in Stage Three the claims and demands are reasserted by the original groups or a new group expresses dissatisfaction with the way in which the complaint was handled and in Stage Four the groups reject the response to their demands and efforts are made to create alternative institutions as a response to established procedures (1977, in Parsons 1995).

of policy do not include the possibility of unintended effects of policy as will be seen in the next section which examines models of implementation and evaluation.

With these qualifications it can, however, be of some help to still analyse policy at various stages. Once formulated, policy is usually, although not always, administered and sometimes evaluated (Sharkansky 2002, Sabatier and Mazamanian 1979, in Parsons 1995, Rossi and Freeman 1993, in Colebatch 2002, Cook 1983, Lincoln and Guba 1985, in Parsons 1995).

Although stages are not neat, automatically consequential or comprehensive, which is a functionalist view of how an organisation deals with opportunities or problems, one merit of looking at stages is that definitions, origins and formulation may have a profound influence on the impact of implementation and the consequent impact of policy as a whole.

While it is recognised that *de facto* policy has no stated goals, where there are specified policy goals, implementation is influenced by the initial definitions and choices (Grindle 1980) of the policy-makers. The more long-term the intended benefits are, the more difficult they may be "to implement than those whose advantages are immediately apparent to the beneficiaries" (Grindle 1980:9).

A participatory position holds that all the stages of policy-making should be shaped by the participants who should also select "the means of accomplishing these goals" (Colebatch 2002:52).

This section has rejected the idealistic nature of distinct stages in the policy-making process. The next section discusses the impact of the different policy perspectives on the formulation of policy.

4. Making policy

As has been seen, different paradigms view policy as an undertaking which can be approached in a variety of ways. This section, therefore, examines theories about the formulation of policy from the perspectives of functionalism, pluralism, power, participation and chaos.

4.1 Functionalist paradigm

While it is not always possible to pinpoint exactly where one stage in the policy-making cycle starts and where another ends, as has been discussed, functionalists include in their list of stages the identification or emergence of a challenge, an opportunity or a problem, the formulation and authorisation of a policy, its implementation and its termination or change. This approach assumes, however, a consensus in all these stages which, a discussion of the other paradigms will demonstrate, cannot exist. They approach the process of policy-making as if it proceeds along an inevitable series of steps, rather than recognising that the steps do not always proceed as predicted by various models. For example, Harman regards policy-making as proceeding in successive stages, with an issue being identified, a policy formulated and authorised and then implemented. He argues that the process finally reaches 'termination' if the problem has been solved. If not, the process proceeds to a stage called 'change' (1984:16-17).

This study will later examine how the 'Joint code of practice' safety policy progressed from the time it was formulated.

4.2 Pluralist paradigm

It should be acknowledged that some of the actors in the process of making or formulating policy are often "powerful professional or expert" elite groups (Parsons 1995:150) which are able to negotiate and do succeed in getting their issue onto the policy agenda, often despite opposition or an unwillingness by other powerful groups.

Seen from the pluralist perspective, policy is made through contested processes which involve a wide range of participants who embrace a variety of competing views and who come from different circumstances. This range of participants who may bring an issue to the policy table might include editors, managers, and interest groups, for example. These groups of people or 'actors', as they are often referred to, identify problems or opportunities or have these brought to their attention and then formulate what becomes known as policy (Parsons 1995), a framework for dealing with perceived problems. Harman's five-stage model maintains that: "At each stage there are often disagreements and conflict and not all policy efforts result in all five stages being reached. Often activity at each stage acts as a stimulus (either immediate or delayed) to

new pressures for change or redirection" (Harman, in Hough 1984:16).[5] It is noted here that different participants in the process "are likely to have distinct and possibly contradictory ideas" about problems as about policy goals (Colebatch 2002:60).

4.3 Power paradigm

While it is accepted that there is often a wide variety of competing actors in the policy-making process, which is essentially a pluralist concept, the power perspective also has relevance when it is recognised that some of the players are more powerful than others (Colebatch 2002). The power approach maintains that the models of stages of policy-making can result in a view that the process is top-down or authoritarian (Lindblom 1968 and Parsons 1995). On the other hand, it cannot always be prescribed who will necessarily take part in the process and it is not guaranteed that all those interested in the policy will be involved.

Lindblom, who acknowledges the role of power in the policy-making process, maintains that while policy has a broad reach, people participate in different ways relative to their access to power:

> Most people – even poets and ballet dancers – know a good deal about policy making. They know, for example, that the immediate responsibility for policy making has to be delegated to officials, that interest-group and party leaders greatly influence these officials, and that the rest of us play less active (though not insignificant) roles in the policy-making drama (1968:1).

This perspective also calls for the investigation of those in whose interest policy is made and it further highlights the role in policy-making of those who have power, which it regards as operating both through discourse and material resources (Strelitz 2000). This approach, which accepts the power of policy-makers to define specific policy, adopt it, implement it, or not, and to review and evaluate it, or not, is incorporated into this study because of the political economy of news organisations which entails a system of operating based on a strict hierarchy and unequal relations of power (McNair 1998, Fourie 1990, Curran et al., in Boyd-Barrett and Braham 1987).

[5] The five stages in Harman's model are: a) Issue emergence and problem identification; b) policy formulation and authorisation; c) implementation; d) termination and e) (possibly) change (in Hough 1984).

Particularly relevant to this study is the recognition that policies can have a potential role in ensuring that power is not abused (Crede and Mansell 1998), since it is likely that those with more power than others may exclude and include issues from and in the policy process. It follows that there should be a check on this power to ensure that it does not work against less powerful participants. In this regard while Lindblom (1968) maintains that participants in the policy-making process generally co-operate in order to solve their differences, he acknowledges, as does Dahl (1982), that the policy process is biased in favour of the powerful (in Parsons 1995:523).

4.4 Participatory paradigm

Colebatch views the policy-making process as potentially having a participatory aspect in which all the participants negotiate the policy together (2002: 23-5). He notes that one should look at non-organised stakeholders or the way in which "those with little standing can challenge the authority and participate in the process" (2002:27).

The participatory approach highlights the extent to which policy is consultative and it offers a role in policy-making to those without power, thereby empowering them. This is significant in terms of a discussion on the role of journalists in the formulation and implementation of safety policy, in that some journalists were consulted by the television news agency managements during and after the policy-making process in this case, while others were left out of the process.

4.5 Chaos paradigm

The chaos paradigm of policy-making notes *inter alia* that because not everyone always gets what they want, policy is often made "before all the facts are in" (Lindblom 1968:109) and that policy is also sometimes made unintentionally (Parsons 1995:13).

Policy-making in terms of this perspective is a dynamic process with policy-makers learning as they go along and finding that changes have to be made to the policy as it is being implemented. It is therefore difficult to claim that there is a point at which policy stops being made and starts being implemented and then evaluated.

Each policy-making process differs from the other and far from being made in an orderly procession in accordance with preordained stages, policies can "emerge from a

confused interplay in which no one takes responsibility for, and no one can be specifically identified as author of a policy choice" (Lindblom 1968:108).

The chaos approach to policy-making is evidenced in the 'garbage can model' which Sharkansky describes thus: "activists stick their hands into a metaphorical garbage can, fish around, and find themselves influenced by one thing and another, without even knowing exactly why" (2002:5). Similarly, arguing that policy-making is "far too complex to be captured in any model", Lindblom (1993, in Parsons 1995:26) introduces the concept of "muddling through", which he claims embraces the notion of incremental change or incrementalism. Proponents of the chaos approach maintain that in reality the world is:

> [F]ar more complicated and not composed of tidy, neat steps, phases or cycles. The idea of dividing up policy-making in such a way greatly overstates the rational nature of policy-making and gives a false picture of a process which is not a conveyor belt in which agenda-setting takes place at one end of the line and implementation and evaluation occurs at the other (Parsons 1995:79).

Reiterating the argument that policy does not work in orderly stages, in which successive steps are ticked off a list as they are accomplished, policies also do not always need to be inspired by a problem. They can instead be motivated by opportunities and in some cases "policies are not decided upon but nevertheless 'happen'" (Lindblom 1968:4). The direct motivation for formulating the 'Joint code of practice' for example, was a plea by the family of a journalist who was killed on a dangerous assignment.

4.6 Summary

As has been mentioned earlier in this chapter, this study prefers a synthesis of aspects of each policy paradigm. It accepts the functionalist paradigm's position that some policy makers view policy as a force to integrate and harmonise an institution in order to improve its functioning. It draws from the participatory approach which maintains that participation in the formulation of policy is integral to it working effectively. It further accepts the pluralist paradigm's view that policy is the result of a wide range of contesting interests, but while these groups do not necessarily naturally reach a

consensus, this study takes the position of the power approach which acknowledges different levels of access to power and that the processes of policy are in fact, sites of struggle. It also recognises, as does the chaos approach, that policy can be slapped together in an *ad hoc* fashion often without enough planning and consultation. The same can also be said for the way in which some policy is implemented and reviewed.

5. Implementing policy

As has been noted earlier in this chapter the administration of policy or its implementation is not always intended, it does not always happen and when it does, it is not necessarily done in the way which the policy-makers initially intended. Implementation can also be assessed in terms of the paradigms discussed so far.

The different perceptions of journalists and news managers of the way in which the 'Joint code of practice' safety policy is implemented are discussed further in this study.

5.1 Functionalist paradigm

The assumption that policy is a set of goals which needs to be reached and which can be measured has resulted in the formulation of various models which suggest what can be counted as effective implementation (Grindle 1980, Sabatier and Mazamanian 1979, in Parsons 1995) and criteria which describe a policy as having failed (Morgan 1993, in Parsons 1995, Colebatch 2002). In this regard this study denies the positivist notion that policy can be measured scientifically in an "objective, systematic, empirical" evaluation (Parsons 1995:545).

Since the goals of the policy process may actually conflict with each other, in some cases the failure to decide on implementation may be the "simplest, and perhaps the best, decision" (Sharkansky 2002:140), Functionalism, however, generally takes implementation for granted.

In terms of the functionalist paradigm, which is based on the assumption that performance can be measured objectively (Parsons 1995), Sharkansky (2002) proffers six conditions as being likely to assist in the effective implementation of policy, but which, he argues, are not all likely to be achieved. These include: clear objectives, sound theory,

sympathy with policy goals, adequate managerial skills, support from constituencies and public support throughout the implementation process.

The simpler the policy and the more realistic the goals, the more likely it will be able to be implemented, according to Grindle (1980). She further maintains that guidelines for policy-making which would help in its effective implementation would include "technically simple, clearly defined, marginal, short-term projects of limited scope" (1980:293). The successful implementation of a policy further depends on whether it has been clearly and unambiguously designed (Harman, in Hough 1984), whether there is a simple and "straightforward" programme for implementation that will require "minimal management effort" (1984:25); and whether the bureaucratic system is committed to its implementation as well as the level of support or opposition within the environment in which it is to be implemented.

It can be argued from a functionalist perspective, that in order for the policy to be evaluated, measures need to be put in place to assess the policy. Should this not be done, it will not be possible to establish whether in fact it is serving its purpose of successfully dealing with the issue in the interests of the efficient functioning of the whole.

These are valuable insights because ultimately 'good' or effective policy must accord with some functionalist principles such as that it is capable of being assessed, is consensual, and that it is comprehensive. On the other hand, this may not be good for power and chaos approaches to policy theory.

5.2 Pluralist paradigm

The pluralist paradigm recognises conflict in the implementation process which it maintains can influence the impact of policy. This perspective can be regarded as "a political calculus of interests and groups competing for scarce resources, the response of implementing officials, and the actions of political elites, all acting within given institutional contexts" (Grindle 1980:12).

It is worth noting in terms of the pluralist perspective, for example, that while news managers may regard the implementation of the 'Joint code of practice' safety policy as being a success, some of their journalist employees, who evaluate the policy in terms of their own experiences with it, do not hold the same view. In fact the opinions of

some journalists may, in turn, also differ markedly from those of some of their colleagues.

Issues that may work against effective policy implementation include opposing interests, co-ordination problems, difficulties in deciding what different individuals want from the policy, who is in charge of implementation and what to expect from officials (Sharkansky 2002:29).

Furthermore, in accordance with pluralist, power and participatory paradigms, it is maintained that those implementing policy also simultaneously shape it (Barrett and Fudge 1981, in Colebatch 2002).

5.3 Power paradigm

Compliance with a policy is not, as functionalists would suggest, a *fait accompl*i with all role players agreeing with its integrative role for the functioning of the institution. For this reason it is sometimes recognised that incentives, whether positive in terms of financial or other rewards, or negative, can be used in an attempt to achieve compliance with a policy (Parsons 1995). This study argues that participation by all stakeholders in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of a policy may be such an incentive.

It is also necessary to assess the "power capabilities" of the various actors in the process irrespective of whether the goals conflict with each other, as some participants may have used their power to exclude the attainment of policy objectives or even the articulation of the aims of less powerful participants (Grindle 1980:12). In this regard, implementation is seen as a "struggle for control" (Jenkins 1978:217) and for this reason a study into any policy should "explore both power and, if possible, powerlessness" (Jenkins 1978:28).

Expanding on his argument that at times "officials intend no implementation", Sharkansky claims that "administrators use what they claim as their discretion not to implement rules that they consider problematic" (2002:33).

Colebatch's view on implementation takes into account the perspective of policy used. One can, he argues, frame policy in terms of the power or "top-down" perspective in which rules are transmitted from an authority at the top, to those at the bottom (2002:23-4). Implementation then, according to this view, "is a question of securing

compliance" by people at the bottom, with orders given or decisions made at the top (2002:53).

That not all of the people involved in the implementation process have the same amount of power, impacts on the attention given a policy issue which in turn, depends on the way in which the policy is framed or "the way in which its 'discourse' has been formed" (Parsons 1995:151). The power approach is also endorsed by Bonepath and Stoper (1988, in Parsons 1995) who argue that "it is clear that policy change occurs only when groups seeking change have sufficient power to influence the policy-making process" (1988:19 in Parsons 1995:103).

It can be argued that those in positions of power have a responsibility to ensure that those for whom a policy is ostensibly made are included in its implementation, as well as in its formulation and evaluation processes. The issue of power and responsibility both of journalists and television news agencies in implementing policy are significant aspects of this study.

Chaos in this scenario can be a function of power, as the lack of a systematic implementation process can be used to advantage those in power, by ensuring their continued control of the process. While something may be seen for some time by some 'actors' as a problem, it only becomes a policy issue when those with the power to influence the process see it as such (Bonepath and Stoper 1988, in Parsons 1995, Habermas 1984 and 1989, in Parsons 1995, Clegg 1975 and Dunkerley 1980, in Ham and Hill 1984). In addition, non-decision-making is also seen as an exercise of power and can be seen as operating when issues are left off the policy agenda by those who have the authority to do so, particularly issues which might be seen as harmful to the system (Offe 1974, in Colebatch 2002 and Bachrach and Baratz 1970, in Parsons 1995).

5.4 Participatory paradigm

The likelihood that some participants in the process may use their power to exclude the goals of the less powerful is a further reason why it is important to look at the success or not of the safety policy from the point of view of journalists and managers.

Highlighting the issues of "negotiation and consensus" (2002:25) in the relationships between participants in the process "outside the line of hierarchical

authority" (2002:23), Colebatch focuses on the process of implementation rather than the outcome. This approach "recognises that policy is an ongoing process and that the participants have their own agendas and therefore their own distinct perspective on any policy issue" (2002:53).

Grindle notes that policy makers should adapt the contents and incentives of the policy "to the interests of those who are to be benefited by the program" (1980:293). However, rather than accepting that an institution implements policy as it is written, the administration of policy should be examined in the context of the demands it places on an organisation's "resources and motivation" (Jenkins 1978:219). Notwithstanding an institution's willingness or not to implement policy, it is not always possible to achieve policy objectives (Horwitz 1989).

This study argues that if the implementation of a policy is to be judged in terms of a check-list, as proposed by Rossi and Freeman (1993, in Colebatch 2002) and Miller (1984, in Parsons 1995), the contents of such a list should be agreed upon by all the participants in the process as they are, therefore, more likely to experience the policy as something in which they have a stake.

It is further recognised that the decision about when to begin evaluating a policy should also be agreed upon by all participants after they have decided when sufficient time has elapsed in order to begin assessing it. The evaluation process often includes a negotiated review process, in which all participants should be involved, in order to be able to draw on the opinions, experiences and perceptions of those involved in making and implementing the policy, and to determine whether they believe it is an effective policy or not. It is particularly important in the view of this study, therefore, to gauge the attitudes of those whom the policy is aimed at helping.

"Evaluation has to be predicated upon wide and full collaboration of all programme stakeholders: agents, (funders, implementers), beneficiaries (target groups, potential adoptees) and those who are excluded 'victims'" (Lincoln and Guba 1985, in Parsons 1995:567-8). In this regard it is argued here that unless all the stakeholders are involved in a process of evaluating the policy, drawn up through consultation, it will be difficult to establish the real impact of a policy.

5.5 Chaos paradigm

Implementation and evaluation can also be seen from the chaos perspective as a process of "interrelated decisions involving a multiplicity of actors, none of whom have any marked degree of control over the situation" (Pressman and Wildavsky 1973, in Jenkins 1978:212). In accordance with the participatory approach, the importance of which this study stresses, it must be recognised that in administering policy, different stakeholders may expect their different needs and interests to be met.

Policy may also have unintended effects which can be identified during the evaluation process and some of which, in relation to the journalist safety policy, are discussed in Chapter 5. It must be recognised that while evaluation, where this stage exists, is typically tackled after implementation has been proceeding for a length of time, the two processes are interdependent and initial policy goals might change as do the circumstances of implementation (Jenkins 1978).

Factors influencing the efficient implementation of a policy may include pressures on time and resources (Jenkins 1978). Concerned with content and context and their impact upon policy implementation, Grindle maintains that the manner in which policy goals are realised, which she describes as "an ongoing process of decision making involving a variety of actors" (1980:10), is not "entirely predictable" and is not always "capable of management" (1980:20).

It is suggested that possible reasons for the failure of policies include a lack of awareness and agreement about their guidelines, and the notion that they were unlikely to succeed (Sharkansky 2002). In addition, the way in which a policy is formulated will also impact on the way in which it is implemented, for example, 'less problematic' policy is simple and has clearly stated goals (Grindle 1980) and the stakeholders agree with the objectives set out in the policy (Gunn 1978, in Ham and Hill 1984).

The understanding of policy by stakeholders is also critical, as the success of its implementation "depends upon the perspective of the observer" (Grindle 1980:281).

The chaos approach to policy would accept that the option of "doing nothing" would be a legitimate way of dealing with obstacles which might arise during the implementation of policy. In addition such "a failure to act", or what is also referred to as

a non-decision, “may actually be a useful device when there is a controversy about policy” (Sharkansky 2002:140).

5.6 Summary

The functionalist approach to implementation is that consensus in formulation will expedite implementation while the pluralists focus is on the impact of contesting interests in the administration of policy. The participatory paradigm, on the other hand, highlights the role of the stakeholders in implementing a policy, which is complemented by the power perspective that certain participants may use their power over others in the process. Finally, the chaos approach highlights a range of unexpected developments that can result in a policy either not being implemented at all or being administered in a haphazard fashion.

The following section suggests that the issue of the power of participants should be a central factor in assessing the policy process.

6. Policy and the power to access the process

The development of the “Joint code of practice” safety guidelines for journalists will be examined later in the context of the news-gathering processes of international television news agencies, and in particular, the power relations embedded in the institutions and how they impact on the formulation and implementation of policy. It must be noted here, however, that any study of a media organisation should not consider the media separately from the economic context in which they operate and should acknowledge that “economic forces of the system direct and constrain the choices of those who manage media, just as they do the choices of managers of any other industry” (Picard 1989:140). News organisations, as component companies of any other industry, operate according to a hierarchy and strict division of labour and “superior-subordinate relationships which regulate the interaction between incumbents in different roles” (Curran et al 1987, in Boyd-Barrett and Braham 1987:65). In this context, a journalist working for a news organisation does “what has to be done to produce the goods, within the constraints set by deadlines and competitive pressures” (McNair 1998:62).

When one discusses, therefore, the roles of different players in a news organisation in the formulation and adoption of policy, it is important to bear in mind that journalists generally do the bidding of those above them in the hierarchy of the news organisation. McNair puts it thus:

> Proprietorial control of journalistic output is exercised, as in any other capitalistic organisation, through the appointment of like-minded personnel in key management positions who are delegated to carry out the boss's will. Journalists who disagree with editorial policy often have their copy 'spiked', or are removed from their positions (1998:107).

Given the hierarchical nature of news organisations, journalists are therefore used to carrying out instructions, but since managers are rarely in the field with them on dangerous assignments it is unlikely that they would be able to formulate an effective safety policy without significant input from journalistic staff. The implementation of such a policy is also an issue at field level (as well as at head office), and evaluation could not occur without the involvement of journalists. This is particularly so in the case of a policy such as the 'Joint code of practice' which has a potentially direct impact on the safety and lives of journalists covering dangerous assignments. This is an important reason why they should be centrally involved in both the formulation and implementation of such a policy.

7. Conclusion

Policy theory has been discussed in relation to a range of theoretical paradigms, namely functionalism, pluralism, participatory, power and chaos and has been further linked to the political economy of news organisations.

It has been noted that policy is seen by functionalism as being able to solve problems or dysfunctions, by pluralists as a contest of different ideas, by the power paradigm in terms of how power is both used and abused in the policy process, and by the chaos perspective as a jumble of ideas. These insights are all useful in terms of analysing the 'Joint code of practice' safety policy. This study, in addition, maintains that without the participation of all the stakeholders in the formulation, implementation and review, it cannot be seen as an effective policy.

A range of actors are involved in the recognition of a policy issue and in formulating a policy to address it. The process of bringing such an issue to the policy table, it was noted, is not a foregone conclusion and can be precipitated by interest groups working outside of the policy-making process. Alternatively, it can have been recognised by decision makers as a result of an existing predisposition or can have been previously excluded as a legitimate problem around which a policy should be developed.

This potential unpredictability of policy is further noted in the criticism of the 'stagist models' of policy-making models which suggest that the process will go through set stages from formulation to implementation and evaluation. Sometimes policies are not intended to be implemented at all and there is also debate over whether implementation starts only once the policy has been formulated. In this regard it is argued that policy-making can be a haphazard process in which it is being formulated or changed as it is implemented and as errors or gaps are discovered.

Participation or not of the widest possible group of stakeholders in safety policy for journalists is important in terms of this analysis of policy theory as the policy process is not neutral. People construct their own meaning and therefore they will hold a range of perceptions about the policy. This study has therefore chosen to research the safety policy for journalists from the point of view of the participants. As suggested by Colebatch, policy "has to be constructed and sustained by the participants in circumstances where they are likely to have choices about which interpretive map to use" (2002:4).

The more managers are able to draw journalists into the process of making and implementing safety policy, the more the journalists will buy into it on a personal level and help to shape it to better serve their needs (Colebatch 2002).

The next chapter analyses policy theory in relation to the origins and development of the safety policy at the two international television news agencies and how safety, in the instance of formulating the policy under discussion, was brought to the policy table as an issue from outside the companies. It also discusses policy theory in the context of the political economy of media institutions and newsroom practices.

Chapter Three

Application of theory

1. Introduction

This chapter analyses the 'Joint code of practice' safety policy for journalists in relation to practices at APTN and Reuters TV and in terms of the theory discussed in the previous chapter. It demonstrates how policy theory both informs the areas of investigation in this study and sets its research agenda. It describes the process leading to the formulation and adoption of the safety policy, and it also examines the policy processes of the two television news agencies in terms of the political economy of media organisations and newsroom practices. In so doing, it traces the companies' development in the 1990s from mainly print and photography news agencies into becoming purveyors of television news footage.

The next section discusses how the policy originated mainly in response to an approach to television news executives by the family of a television agency cameraman who was killed while on a dangerous assignment.

2. Origins of the policy

From a functionalist perspective which sees policy opportunities in dysfunctions to be harmonised in order for an institution to function (Parsons 1995, Berger 2003), the deaths in an ambush in Sierra Leone on 24, May 2000 of Miguel Gil Moreno de Mora, an APTN cameraman and Kurt Schork, a Reuters correspondent, four months before the policy was formulated, focussed attention on the issue of journalists being physically attacked while working in the field (see Feinstein et al 2002, Reporters Without Borders 2002, INSI 2003, The Newspaper Guild 2002, IFJ 2004). The deaths were seen by journalists themselves as a problem because the attack which killed Gil Moreno de Mora and Schork could have happened anywhere, to any journalist. It is also argued that whether or not it was openly or immediately recognised, the deaths, or what they symbolised, were a challenge to the functioning of the news agencies as institutions because if more journalists were killed, the companies would be less able to fulfil their roles to supply television footage to their clients efficiently and in competition with the other agency.

The deaths, therefore, had a potential financial impact on the companies as well as on their insurance companies which had to pay out large sums of money to the next-of-kin. In addition, it can be argued that the deaths of the two prominent journalists and the consequent debate about safety issues (see Maas 2000) were potentially problematic for the agencies' images within the industry.

The origins of this safety policy can be analysed in terms of the participatory and pluralist paradigms of policy in that the impetus for its initiation came from outside the two companies, from the Gil Moreno de Mora family. The slain cameraman's brother, Alvaro Gil Moreno de Mora had asked the Freedom Forum's European Centre to organise a gathering of editors, news executives, and senior journalists to "focus on what practical things could be done, to help prepare journalists for assignments to dangerous conflict areas" (Owen, in The Freedom Forum 2000). The seminar was held in London in September 2000 and invited guests were sent an open letter by the Gil Moreno de Mora family in advance of this meeting. The letter asked that news organisations incorporate into their policies universal standards for such areas as insurance, training, hazardous duty and terms of employment and benefits for freelancers, fixed stringers and local staff (2000)

As noted in Lindblom's (1968) power approach to policy, while interest groups can have a significant role in bringing a problem to the attention of policy-makers, an official needs to agree before an issue is accepted onto the policy agenda. In this regard, the recommendations of the family could only be put into policy form by the concurrence of the news executives present at the meeting. During the consequent formulation of the policy, the news executives not only agreed to all the elements suggested by the family, but added aspects of their own. The new elements included that dangerous assignments are voluntary and that only experienced journalists "and those under their direct supervision" should be assigned to cover them (Freedom Forum 2000). The power perspective comes into play when discussing the origins of this policy in relation to both the family's power to approach the news executives and this group's power to include and exclude aspects in the policy (Bachrach and Baratz 1970, in Parsons 1995).

After the seminar a group of news executives established the London-based News Security Group which drew up the 'Joint code of practice for journalists working in

conflict zones' which was officially adopted and supported by APTN, Reuters, CNN, BBC and ITN on November 16, 2000 at the News World Summit in Barcelona, Spain (Freedom Forum 2000). The policy specifically 'commits' the signatory news organisations to carrying out its measures (Freedom Forum 2000:3).

Apart from the letter by the Gil Moreno de Mora family which was a direct plea to the news executives, the fact of the death of the two journalists was enough for some commentators to suggest a re-examination of media safety rules (Feinstein et al. 2002 and Maas 2000). In this regard see also Cook et al (1983) who illustrate how pressure can assist in getting an issue put onto the policy agenda. In addition it is accepted that a policy such as the one under discussion may have been adopted because of an existing predisposition (Yanovitsky 2000) as Gil Moreno de Mora was the second television agency cameraman, also from APTN, to be killed on assignment in just over a year.

Chris Cramer, the Managing Director of CNN International, on the other hand, argues that the groundwork had already been laid by guidelines he was instrumental in formulating when he worked at the BBC in the early 1990's (interview 2004). In this regard it is argued from a functionalist perspective that in tracing the origins of a policy, we should "analyse the structure, historical development, personal networks and decisions over time of the institutions involved in finding a solution to a 'problem'" (March and Olsen 1972, in Parsons 1995:224). Similarly, Parsons also recognises that policy-making occurs within the "parameters of past policies and choices" (1995:230).

The way in which this safety policy document was formulated, therefore, also corresponds to insights from the pluralist paradigm that policy is made through co-operation and agreement by elites, after the resolution of conflicts between the "many specialists" involved in the process (Lindblom 1968:31).

Participants in the Freedom Forum seminar included news executives: Rodney Pinder, Reuters Head of News for Television; Nigel Baker, APTN's Head of News; Chris Cramer, the President of CNN International Networks; and Richard Sambrook, Deputy Director of BBC News, who sat on one panel; and on another panel, journalists Jeremy Bowen, from the BBC; Roy Gutman, the Diplomatic Editor of Newsweek Magazine and the Director of the War Crimes Project; Ron McCullagh, the Head of Insight TV News and Vaughan Smith, the Director of Frontline Television which represents freelance

television journalists. John Owen, the Director of the Freedom Forum European Centre gave the introduction and CNN's Chief International Correspondent, Christiane Amanpour chaired the discussion.

From a participatory perspective, the process of making this safety policy appeared, on the surface, to include a wide range of actors in the world of journalism, but it can be argued that what was lacking was the formal involvement by less senior, more grassroots level journalists. Significantly there were no television agency journalists on either panel while some, who had heard about the seminar from friends and colleagues, joined other journalists in the audience of about 100. While the journalists could ask questions from the floor (interview 2004), they were not formally invited onto either panel to discuss their views of safety issues.[10]

Before the Gil Moreno de Mora family approached the television news industry the agencies had their own mix of formal and informal policies on safety. Both of the agencies typically provided some protective equipment for their staff, journalists were encouraged not to take risks and the agencies had already begun sending journalists on safety training courses. There had not previously been such a high profile focus on the issue of the safety of journalists. Significantly the death, also in Sierra Leone, of another agency journalist just over a year before that of Schork and Gil Moreno de Mora, was deemed a tragic accident, and apart from the agency withdrawing all its staff from the country for months, his death did not result in increased agency-wide attention on safety (Anthony 1999)[11]. A reason for this may have been because there was little organised pressure from family or other interest groups to question safety policies and practices, and that the other agency did not also suffer a simultaneous loss of one of its staff as in the case of Gil Moreno de Mora and Schork.

The action in formulating the safety policy of 2000 assumed a functionalist trajectory because it acted on an opportunity that might have been perceived as affecting the functioning of an institution as a whole. The process of identifying an issue,

[10] A television agency journalist who was in the audience at the Freedom Forum seminar, and who was interviewed for background about the participation of ordinary journalists in the safety policy, asked the researcher what had happened as a result of those discussions. When he was informed about the safety policy his reaction was: "It was never implemented … apart from going on the Centurion (safety training) course" (interview 2004).

[11] Myles Tierney, an APTN cameraman/producer was shot and killed on 10 January 1999 while in a convoy with Sierra Leone's Minister of Information.

formulating a policy and implementing it in the case of the television news agencies, did proceed along a "logical path" as suggested by Lasswell's functionalist approach (1978:18, in Parsons 1995). It will, however, be argued that in failing to seek or establish the views of television news agency journalists broadly, a valuable opportunity was lost, in the sense that it would have given these journalists the opportunity to contribute to the making of the policy and thereby taking ownership of it. Functionalism in this sense ignores the inherent conflict between different interest groups in the process of making policy.

An examination of the formulation of this policy, particularly in terms of both the political economy of the media and newsroom practices of international television agencies, will be discussed in the next section.

3. Agency journalists: Participation versus observation

While the safety policy was drawn up in response to an initiative from the Gil Moreno de Mora family, it was formulated in order to help protect journalists who cover conflict. It is therefore necessary to interrogate, from the different policy theory perspectives, whether and how these journalists were consulted about the policy.

The involvement of television news agency managers at the Freedom Forum seminar would be seen from the pluralist paradigm as part of a "free competition between ideas and interests" (Parsons 1995:134). What this approach does not take into account, however, are the power relations in both the news industry and the two media organisations. The pluralist approach does not deal with the idea that those with power have the ability to both exclude certain issues as policy issues, and to include others.

Journalists, for example, who believed that safety was a problem before managers explicitly and publicly recognised it as such, did not, on their own, have the power to make safety policy. The pluralist approach recognises the power of interest groups to intervene in the process to ensure that they are at least able to get a hearing on an issue they believe should be on the policy agenda. Managers also have the power to decide who would participate in the formulation and review, if any, of the policy.

The next section examines the safety policy in the context of the political economy of news organisations and newsroom sociology which is useful in highlighting

the relationships between different role players and illustrates their respective levels of power.

4. Political economy and newsroom practices

International television news agencies, like other media organisations, function according to a strict hierarchy in which journalist staff follow instructions usually set by management, which allow little or no opportunity for journalists to participate in making or changing these arrangements. The power paradigm describes the news industry in terms of Marxist theory as:

> [N]ot as an autonomous organizational system, but as a set of institutions closely linked to the dominant power structure through ownership, legal regulation, the values implicit in the professional ideologies in the media, and the structures and ideological consequences of prevailing modes of news-gathering (Fourie 1990:279).

It was not possible to establish the precise extent to which journalist working for the television news agencies were consulted in the formulation of the policy, but this study shows that it was not extensive. It consisted mainly of some senior journalists being asked by their managers about issues of safety and in some instances this was done after the policy was formulated.[12]

News agency journalists work in an environment in which news is a commodity (Winseck 1997 in Berger 2000) which is sold in the market place, to the agencies' broadcast clients for vast sums of money with broadcasters paying an estimated $1-million dollars a year (television broadcast and agency managers 2004) to subscribe to an agency's product. The hub of the production of both APTN and Reuters TV are their head office newsrooms, both based in London, which oversee and direct all coverage internationally. This coverage is managed by head office staff who assign journalists and liaise with them in the field. Daily control over these newsrooms is in the hands of a senior management editorial staffer who, while frequently working within what can be seen as the pluralist paradigm in holding discussions, either directly or through other

[12] A former senior television agency journalist interviewed for this study said he was consulted by his managers about safety issues about four months after the policy was formulated (D965 follow-up interview 2004).

newsroom staff, with staff in the field and in the newsroom, has the final say over when and how the agencies' daily budget is spent.

Television news agencies cover the international stories they regard as most important, in other words, stories which they believe would interest their major clients. Covering these stories and transmitting them by satellite to the London headquarters for packaging and distribution costs money and therefore news managers must ultimately decide each day on which stories to spend money. In the final analysis decisions over news production, like the product of any other capitalist enterprise, come down to a question of cost, bearing in mind, nonetheless that if a huge story broke, such as the attack on the World Trade Centre in September 2001, or the South East Asia tsunami disaster in December 2004, when the daily news budget is quickly depleted, it is still covered and the deficit factored in over time.

Each television news agency falls under the final control of a parent company, the internationally influential Reuters and The Associated Press (AP). These rival international news agencies, which for decades mainly focused on producing print news and photography, branched into television towards the end of the last century. In the early 1990s Reuters bought Visnews, a television news agency which it previously owned jointly with the American broadcaster NBC (National Broadcasting Corporation) and the UK's BBC, and in 1998 AP, which started its own television arm APTV in 1994, bought Worldwide Television News (WTN), leaving only two international television news agencies.

APTN and Reuters TV compete to impress existing and potential broadcast clients who receive from them dozens of television stories a day from around the world. One of the main platforms for the display of this competitive output is the Eurovision (EVN) "exchange" administered by the European Broadcasting Union. This announces, on screens in the offices of all major European public broadcasters several times a day, which agency had won an "exclusive" over the other or whether they were "common" on a particular story. News managers rate these EVN exchanges highly and often use their competitiveness to motivate their staff and to impress television broadcast clients. This emphasis on competition runs counter to the sentiment of the safety policy which the

BBC's Deputy Director of News and chairman of the News Security Group, Richard Sambrook described as representing:

> [U]nprecedented co-operation between competitors in the broadcast news industry to try to protect all journalists, staff and freelance, working in dangerous conditions… Our aim is to limit risk and to take responsibility for anyone working on our behalf in war zones or hostile environments. We have all signed up to these principles and agreed that safety can never be a competitive issue (Freedom Forum 2000).

It is further significant to note the assessment journalists' work in terms of competitiveness with other journalists has been criticised as influencing them to take more risks (Maas 2000, Brown 2001, Pinder 2003). The competition between the two agencies is described particularly in relation to the demand for television news from conflict areas as:

> This appetite for blood-splattered film is fed largely by two companies locked in their own fierce battle for dominance – APTN and Reuters, which are both based in London and sell footage to all the major networks in the United States (Maas 2000:3).

Competition between the two agencies received a boost in recent years by advances in digital technology, which have allowed television news footage to be transmitted from anywhere, under even the most trying conditions, faster than before and sometimes in real time (Halstead 2003). This has allowed the live transmission of video material which results in increased amounts of television news footage being distributed and which has been recognised as a lucrative product in itself by the television agencies which exploit it as an additional commercial service. Consequently both agencies have increasingly, since the mid-2003, transmitted live video of news events they believe would interest their broadcast clients, such as scenes from the Iraq War in 2003 and anti-globalisation protests in Europe. In so doing, news managers are particularly aware of the added advantage of potentially getting the pictures distributed to their clients before their competitor who may choose to edit the story before transmitting it.

The commodity of television news agencies is increasingly produced in dangerous areas with the prolonged war in Iraq occupying the agendas of most television

broadcasters around the world. The demand for footage from Iraq has not waned and as broadcasters poured vast resources into their own coverage of the war, there is less available to spend on contracts with both the agencies. While the major broadcasters traditionally subscribe to both Reuters TV and APTN, the added financial responsibility of covering the conflict for more than two years, has led some to reconsider whether to retain both agencies.[13] This in turn results in the agencies competing more fiercely with each other to keep the clients they have, and to possibly win over new ones.

Agency camera operators and producers often work under intense pressure to produce footage for broadcasters around the world, particularly when covering a conflict in which there is wide international interest.

The next section looks at the threat to journalists' safety, particularly when they undertake assignments in war zones where they must face danger just to do their jobs.

5. Threats to journalists' safety

Safety implies freedom from danger and in the news-gathering context, safety implies protection from a range of threats journalists encounter, including arrest, legal action, imprisonment, kidnapping, intimidation, bombs, landmines, being shot in the cross-fire, so-called 'friendly fire' and murder, amongst others.[14]

Television news agency journalists, or more specifically the camera operators and the producers who work for them have, since the September 11, 2001 attacks in the United States, been increasingly involved in covering news in what they call "hot spots", "war zones" or hostile environments as a range of conflicts flared up in countries like Afghanistan and Iraq. With increased attacks on journalists, this work has simply become more dangerous (Cramer 2004, Committee to Protect Journalists 2003, International News 2003 and Brown 2001) and many commentators are now convinced that journalists

[13] A broadcast news manager maintains that many broadcasters were considering dropping one agency "for financial reasons. In fact, it's a very painful thing to do, to cut out one agency, it's very painful. And if the big guys are thinking it, you can imagine the small guys have probably done it" (interview 2004).

[14] The CPJ reported that: "While conflict and war have provided the backdrop to much of the violence against the press over the last decade, the vast majority of journalists killed since 1993 did not die in cross fire. Instead, they were hunted down and murdered, often in direct reprisal for their reporting. In fact, according to CPJ statistics, only 60 journalists (16 percent) died in cross fire, while 277 (76 percent) were murdered in retribution for their work. The remaining journalists were killed in conflict situations that cannot be described as combat – while covering violent street demonstrations, for example (CPJ 2003:3-4)".

have themselves become targets.[15] Recent examples include Daniel Pearl, Tareq Ayyoub, Jose Couso, Taras Protsiuk.[16]

The recent technological advances, which have allowed journalists to edit and transmit video footage from a laptop computer working with a small satellite telephone for example, have "greatly increased the number of journalists covering conflicts while intensifying the competitive pressures that can push them to take unwarranted risks" (CPJ 2004). These technological innovations, while changing the face of news coverage, have also:

> [S]erved to escalate the hazards with which journalists must cope. Not only have modern weapons removed the need to see one's enemy before shooting them, but light-weight cameras and satellite phones mean journalists are more mobile, making it easier for them to travel into hostile areas (Brown 2001:40).

Of all journalists it is the camera operators and photographers who take the biggest risks in conflict areas as they need to be up close, where the action is:

> In the world of journalism, war cameramen and women are the ones at the sharp end. War correspondents may get the "facetime" and headlines, but it is the "combat cameras" that really go where others fear to tread. Nobody need rely on their word that they were in the thick of the action; the proof is there in the pictures they take. There is no place to hide for a camera operator. And that is the problem. Increasingly, those at the tip of the spear are also the targets (Pitcairn in INSI 2003:119)

It is further maintained here that, in addition to covering such conflicts, some of the other work that journalists do is dangerous or potentially dangerous and this includes disease which some regard as a safety issue (Nkosi 2004). Television news agency journalists are often assigned to cover news in areas where they are in danger of contracting diseases

[15] "Journalists have always been casualties during the conflicts they are sent to cover. And yet, in recent years, a worrying trend has emerged. Some individuals, factions and regimes around the world have come to regard them as 'legitimate' targets for harassment, robbery, assault and even murder" (Cramer in INSI 2003:i).

[16] Daniel Pearl of the Wall Street Journal was abducted and beheaded in Pakistan in 2002. Tareq Ayyoub, an Al-Jazeera correspondent was killed when US forces fighter jets fired on his company's offices in Baghdad, and Jose Couso a cameraman for Telecinco and Tara Protsuik, a Reuters Television cameraman were killed when a US tank fired on the Palestine Hotel in Baghdad which was known as the main hotel for journalists (INSI 2003).

such as cholera, typhoid and malaria, and there are times when the subject of the news they are sent to cover is about a disease, for example the outbreak of the highly contagious ebola virus in central Africa in the mid-1990s, and the health impact of the tsunamis in South East Asia in late 2004 and early 2005. Both these examples were international news stories. Simply covering such stories put journalists at risk of health hazards. The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) also recognises pre-existing medical conditions which can prove fatal in the field as well as road accidents as among "the hazards of war coverage" (2004:6)[17].

In the face of these dangers, a legitimate question can be raised asking what is the real point of having a safety policy for journalists who cover conflict? This is discussed in the next section.

6. Safety for journalists – a contradiction or a necessity?

A question that must be asked is whether it is not contradictory to seek a policy to keep 'safe' those whose work often leads them into life-threatening situations. How can one discuss safety policy in relation to an industry which covers news in dangerous conditions and which puts its staff in harm's way in order to supply footage to television broadcast clients for them to disseminate in their news bulletins and in current affairs programmes?

This study argues that this is not a contradiction at all, but rather it is precisely because of the dangers often faced by these journalists in the course of their work that a policy must be developed and implemented to minimize the risks even if it cannot completely protect them. This is particularly relevant in the context of advances in digital technology which have provided television journalists with the ability to film and transmit news, at any time, from any location of the world, even while under fire (Taylor

[17] In an interview after the death of his wife, journalist Veronica Cabrera in a car accident in Iraq, Omar Hernandez was asked if he thought it was 'ironic' that an experienced war correspondent should have died in that way. He answered: "It is, but on the other hand it isn't, because after all the accident was related to the conflict. Apparently the caravan was traveling at high speed to reach Baghdad before the curfew. And it looks like they got caught by some 'scrap' [shell fragments] and then the accident occurred" (Bustos, in INSI 2003:139-40).

1992:10) which has, as noted further in this section, led to both increased competitiveness and increased dangers (Brown 2001, Maas 2000).[18]

It may be noted that the very wording of the policy as 'safety' guidelines has a symbolic significance in the politics of policy. To functionalists the safety of journalists can be increased through policy, whereas for the power approach, on the other hand, policy is a way to maintain power relations by controlling who is involved in formulating and implementing and reviewing the policy, and deciding who will have access to safety equipment and training, for example.

Clearly, no amount of training, protective clothing, and as Feinstein et al maintain, "experience, knowledge, and common sense" (2002:1) will guarantee journalists' safety, but measures can be put in place to help to protect them.

While it is clearly impossible to ensure that a journalist covering a dangerous assignment will be "free from hurt or damage" or "not exposed to danger; not be liable to be harmed or lost" (OED 1989:355), individuals and journalist organisations are increasingly insisting that the news organisations which employ them should take steps to reduce the risks they face and to ensure that they have all the protective measures that they might need, as far as possible. Cramer, a pioneer of media safety policy in the television industry, maintains that companies who send journalists into situations in which their safety will be compromised "have to ensure that they take every conceivable measure to protect the staff or the freelances that work for them" (2000:6). He makes this call from three positions. He draws on a humanitarian concern for his staff and journalists in general, a desire to adhere from a corporate perspective (when he formulated the BBC safety guidelines) to British health and safety legislation directed at companies, and from a professional concern that "no story is worth a life" (interview 2004). As can be seen therefore, safety policy is designed to satisfy several interests.

In line with Cramer's position but from a humanitarian and professional perspective, Reporters Without Borders insists that:

[18] In his paper 'Safety Training – A Challenge: Field Safety for International Television News Gathering' Smith notes: "Television news-gathering in times of conflict has never been safe and will never become so. The statistics are stark: conflict journalism is one of the most dangerous jobs in the world, more dangerous than being deployed operationally as a soldier or aid worker" (2004:2).

> Journalists and their assistants (whether permanent staff or freelance) working in war zones or dangerous areas are entitled to basic protection, compensation and guarantees from their employers, though protection must never be taken to mean supervision by local military and governmental authorities. Media management also have their own responsibility to make every effort to prevent and reduce the risks involved (2002:2).

The Paris-based international press freedom watchdog made this call nearly two years after news executives had drawn up the 'joint code of practice' which requires amongst others, that media companies provide their staff and freelancers with safety training as well as safety equipment.

It is clear that while the safety of journalists who work in conflict areas cannot be guaranteed; there is widespread interest in the industry in taking steps to make them as safe as possible. From a power perspective the fact that this policy discourages risk-taking, indicates that the television news agencies would want journalists to take some responsibility for their safety. The 'Joint code of practice' is, therefore, seen as an important measure to help ensure this. It is discussed in detail in the next section.

7. The policy

The 'Joint code of practice for journalists working in conflict zones' or 'safety guidelines' was drawn up by the News Safety Group and adopted in November 2000, by a range of television companies, including APTN and Reuters TV. It calls for journalists to be afforded personal insurance coverage against death and injury, and advocates mandatory safety training and retraining and access to safety equipment. It reads:

1. The preservation of human life and safety is paramount. Staff and freelancers should be made aware that unwarranted risks in pursuit of a story are unacceptable and must be strongly discouraged. Assignments to war zones or hostile environments must be voluntary and should only involve experienced news gatherers and those under their direct supervision.
2. All staff and freelancers asked to work in hostile environments must have access to appropriate safety training and retraining. Employers are encouraged to make this mandatory.
3. Employers must provide efficient safety equipment to all staff and freelancers assigned to hazardous locations.

4. All staff and freelancers should be afforded personal insurance while working in hostile areas, including coverage against death and personal injury.
5. Employers are to provide and encourage the use of voluntary and confidential counselling for all staff and freelancers returning from hostile areas or after the coverage of distressing events.
6. Media companies and their representatives are neutral observers. No member of the media should carry a firearm in their course of their work.
7. We will work together to establish a databank of safety information, including the exchange of up-to-date safety assessments of hostile and dangerous areas.
8. We will work with other broadcasters and organizations to safeguard journalists in the field (Freedom Forum 2000).

While this policy operates from the overriding premise of safeguarding human life and strongly discourages risk-taking in pursuit of a story (Freedom Forum 2000) and includes both staff and freelancers in its provisions, it does have gaps which will be discussed in the next section.

8. Gaps in the safety policy

While the 'Joint code of practice' emphasises the importance of journalists undergoing training in safety it does not, however, suggest that they should have access to first aid equipment which they are taught to use on these safety training courses. In addition, while its drafters added an element which the Gil Moreno de Mora family had not asked for – that journalists have the right to refuse dangerous assignments, which previously existed as a *de facto* policy within the agencies, there are important omissions. The news executives who drew up the policy did not include a clause dealing with the review of the policy which the family had requested. The policy also does not specify a strategy by means of which this policy can be communicated to journalists and neither does it detail measures by which it can be implemented or reviewed.

There are several other matters that are not spelled out in the policy. The sections that follow assess the strengths and weaknesses of the 'Joint code of practice'.

8.1 The role of communication in implementation

As noted earlier, the policy process omitted the broad participation by journalists, an involvement that would have raised awareness in its target constituency. This omission is

all the more reason why that in order for a policy about journalists' safety to then be successfully implemented, from the point of view of all stakeholders, it should be communicated within the news organisation and particularly to journalists so that they can be made aware of its existence.

The method of communicating a policy to staff should be carefully considered and designed to ensure maximum awareness of it. For example, although a company prints a policy "in a glossy book", it can still often mean that "most people in the organisation … haven't seen it" (Colebatch 2002:52). Likewise, informing staff of policy developments by email is not the same things as having a strategy to communicate it to them. In addition, sending emails about developments within a company can mean that staff either do not read it or it is only sent to certain senior staff (Leonard 2004).[19]

It must be noted here that a lack of awareness about a policy and a lack of agreement with a policy are two reasons typically given for the failure of policy implementation (Sharkansky 2002, Jenkins 1978:217).

8.2 Safety training

The safety policy for journalists stipulates that they "must have access to appropriate training" and significantly it adds "and retraining" and it says that "employers are encouraged to make this mandatory" (Freedom Forum 2000).

In this regard both APTN and Reuters TV send their staff to five-day 'hostile-environment' training programmes in the United Kingdom, run by former military personnel, in order to help to protect them in the field. At a cost of more than $2 000 per person, excluding travel costs, the course is beyond the financial reach of most freelancers although some are sponsored by the Rory Peck Trust, and the Reuters Foundation helps to subsidise the cost for freelancers "on a case-by-case basis" (CPJ 2004:14). Both APTN and Reuters TV also support the Rory Peck Trust (Rory Peck

[19] A bureau chief with The Associated Press expressed this about the communication of policy: "Policy isn't any good if people don't know about it but you can't just send an email because half the people don't read company emails anyway" (Leonard interview 2004).

Trust 2004). The application of this aspect of the policy to freelance journalists is discussed later in this chapter.[20]

While there exists a range of safety training courses for journalists internationally, the one attended by most of the respondents in this study teaches journalists battlefield first aid, how to react when taken hostage, and "how to listen for the trajectory of bullets, to evaluate the thickness of a cement or a brick wall", amongst other basics (CPJ 2004:10). An interesting point from the power perspective of policy is that while the safety policy says journalists "must have access to appropriate training and retraining", and the CPJ suggests they return for a refresher course every three years, the television news agencies, in the absence of spelling out what they mean by "access" to safety training and without the involvement journalists in monitoring and review mechanisms, have generally not done this.

Another potential problem the policy did not forsee is an example from the power perspective of policy which is that news managers may further strengthen their control over the process by selectively consulting journalists on safety issues rather than inviting all staff and freelancers to contribute their opinions. The participatory paradigm of policy, on the other hand, would see this as disabling the process of implementing the policy.

The CPJ warns that some journalists who have completed a safety training course may be left with a false sense of their security in the field and it therefore advises that the main value of this training is that one becomes "mindful of danger in advance" (2004:14)[21].

The safety policy's only recognition of the limited role that safety training can play in protecting journalists in combat zones is where it states that only 'experienced' journalists and those whom they supervise should be sent to combat zones. It does not explain what experience means in this context and neither does it entertain the possibility that other attributes, such as good judgement, the ability to work well in a team and to

[20] In 2004 the International News Safety Institute provided safety training in Iraq for Iraqi journalists, including some who work with foreign television news companies such as the BBC, ITN and ABC (the American Broadcasting Corporation). All participants were given first aid kits (INSI 2004).

[21] Speaking about the safety training course which most AP journalists attend, Leonard said: "I think there's far too much emphasis put on the importance of this programme. I think it should be done … but if we think because we've sent people to this programme they are suddenly going to be much safer journalists, I think that's wrong. They don't learn enough in a week to become seasoned combat people" (Leonard interview 2004).

remain calm in a crisis, might also be considered when assigning a journalist to cover a story in a dangerous environment. In this regard this study investigates what policy-related procedures, if any, are in place in the television agencies to select people to cover conflict. In the opinion of seasoned AP writer and news manager Terry Leonard, people should not be sent to cover dangerous assignments simply because they are available and willing to go. He maintains that:

> [T]here are two kinds of people … who definitely should not be in war zones… people who are not secure enough in their own judgement to make their own decisions, who will go because the crowd's going, who will go because their desk editor wants them to go. The other kind that's really a disaster is what we would call a 'war junkie', somebody who feeds off the adrenalin of covering a war and who will take risks that are absolutely absurd because he loves what he's doing. These are people who get to the point where they cannot tell the difference between acceptable and ridiculous risk (interview 2004).

To some extent the 'Joint code of practice' acknowledges the phenomenon raised by Leonard by its disapproval of risk-taking.

8.3 Equipment

The safety policy says: "Employers must provide efficient safety equipment to all staff and freelances (sic) assigned to hazardous locations, including personal issue Kevlar vests/jackets, protective headgear and properly protected vehicles if necessary" (Freedom Forum 2000:3). In accordance with this clause both APTN and Reuters TV supply their staff with bullet-proof vests, also known as 'flak jackets' for dangerous assignments. In practice, however, there are instances in which journalists do not wear them, maintaining that they make them too conspicuous and even make them targets for thieves and military forces. This was not recognised in the policy.

In its most recent guide for journalists working on dangerous assignments the CPJ has this advice regarding body armour: "Bulletproof vests are not bulletproof" (2004:15).[22] It further explains the different types of projectiles different vests can stop and claims that those wearing body armour "can still suffer serious injury or die as a

[22] The CPJ is an American organisation and its spelling of bullet-proof vests differs from the one used in this study which follows English spelling.

result of the blunt trauma inflicted by high-calibre or high-velocity bullets" (2004:15). It also advises that Kevlar vests must be kept dry in order to function efficiently while vests containing anti-ballistic ceramic plates should not be dropped. Some of these issues are raised on safety training courses, but television agency journalists are generally provided with one type of bullet-proof vest, Kevlar, and in some cases also with 'stab vests'. The safety policy, however, does not distinguish between types of protective clothing for different situations and neither does it explain how news organisations should decide on which types of protective gear to supply to journalists.

It is also not spelt out in the policy who decides when it may be necessary to supply armoured vehicles in the field and how it is decided, which is particularly critical since it would require much planning and logistics to get a vehicle to a combat area. The policy also does not stipulate how journalists should go about replacing broken or lost safety equipment.

8.4 The power to refuse

One of the most important elements of the safety policy is the participatory clause that gives journalists the right to refuse dangerous assignments. As noted earlier, this was not originally requested by the Gil Moreno de Mora family when they approached the news executives, but was added when the policy was formulated. It reads: "Assignments to war zones or hostile environments must be voluntary and should only involve experienced news-gatherers and those under their direct supervision" (2000:3).

Whether journalists indeed take up this right of refusal is further investigated in this study. It is interesting to note here, however, that a study by Feinstein et al (2002) into the psychological affects on journalists who cover war, found that they are likely to be reluctant to refuse dangerous assignments because they fear the "adverse career consequences" that such a decision could have (2002:3).

It is also useful, in this regard, to look at models which seek to explain why people comply with policies. Staff in organisations may do so out of fear, because of remunerative interests, or because they agree with the policy (Etzioni 1961, in Parsons 1995:517). It is expected, however, that journalists would comply with the 'Joint code of practice' safety policy because they know it is in their interests to do so. Some, however,

may prioritise interests of career and peer status over the safety provisions and right to refuse. The 'Joint code of practice' fails to recognise this.

8.5 Freelancers

The safety policy expressly includes freelancers as falling under its ambit, but it does not explicitly differentiate between categories of freelancers. Apart from often engaging the services of freelance camera operators and producers, when television agency journalists travel to cover a dangerous assignment they routinely hire local drivers, translators, fixers – usually local journalists who can arrange interviews and access for journalists to cover particular stories. The safety policy stipulates that "all staff and freelance" be afforded safety training as well as safety equipment and personal insurance, but it is unlikely that drivers, fixers and translators are routinely afforded these rights in accordance with the policy.[23]

In Iraq where more journalists were killed in 2003 than in the previous 30 years anywhere in the world (INSI 2003), the deaths of journalists, the possibility of being kidnapped and even beheaded have impacted on experienced journalists in the sense that some are increasingly unwilling to cover the war there (Nkosi 2004). This trend leaves a gap for hungry freelancers to fill.[24]

In an article on the dangers of working in Iraq journalist Robert Fisk coined the phrase "Hotel Journalism" to describe how Western journalists there have to operate. They are increasingly:

> [R]eporting from their hotels rather than the streets of Iraq's towns and cities. Some are accompanied everywhere by hired and heavily armed Western

[23] This study uses 'freelancer' to describe a person who is hired on a temporary basis for a news agency.
[24] Characterising the safety threats to Journalists in Iraq, Nkosi said: "The kidnap has got the beheading and so on and you know, if you are in a war zone anybody can be shot, so it's kind of a given rule. If I'm in Iraq I may well be shot, a bomb may be dropped, you know. But the idea that I can be picked up and isolated, put in a cage and then be slaughtered on camera, by a butcher's knife, there's not that many people who want to entertain (that), I think. Because there's some belief that bombs are dropped to specific targets and bullets go to people. I mean lots of people died in what the Americans call 'collateral damage'. Still you need to be somewhere closer to the war to be likely to be shot, closer to combat, whereas with the kidnappings you could be sleeping with your doors locked and a guard at the door and you can still be taken, you know. That's different, that's different altogether. So people are terrified, especially of the beheadings. I think that has really changed …" (interview 2004).

> mercenaries. A few live in local offices, from which their editors refuse them permission to leave (2005).

Similarly, in her account of the impact of security issues in Iraq on journalists assigned to cover the news there, Wall Street Journal journalist Farnaz Fassihi described how her reporting work had become less important than her responsibility in attending to matters of security.[25] And a representative of the community of journalists for hire, who are called upon to augment the coverage of news outfits, claims that freelance journalists are simply exploited. British freelance reporter Lee Gordon emphasises what he sees as the exploitation of freelance journalists:

> Freelancers continue to pour into Iraq in search of a scoop. And our media continue to encourage them with nods and winks about staff jobs. Do their parents realise their children will have fewer employment rights than a paperboy?" (2004).

The dangers faced by freelancers are receiving increased attention by media organisations internationally. The CPJ said that when some stories became more dangerous for Western journalists, media companies increasingly relied on local freelancers whose association with international journalists often makes them targets.[26] In Iraq alone "nine fixers, translators and drivers have been killed in 2004, while at least a dozen others have been threatened, attacked or injured" (Witchel 2004:6). Recognising that local journalists and the companies for whom they work usually cannot afford to buy protective clothing or to enrol in expensive safety training courses, the CPJ: "strongly urges all news organizations to ensure that journalists and others working for them

[25] Fassihi explained: "I am house-bound. I leave when I have a very good reason to, like a scheduled interview. I avoid going to people's homes and never walk in the streets. I can't go grocery shopping anymore, can't eat in restaurants, can't strike up a conversation with strangers, can't look for stories, can't drive in anything less than an armoured vehicle, can't go to the scenes of breaking news, can't be stuck in traffic, can't speak English outside, can't take a road trip, can't say I'm an American, can't linger at checkpoints, and can't be curious about what people are saying, doing and feeling. And can't, and can't… There has been one too many close calls, including a car bomb so near our house that it blew out all the windows. So now my most pressing concern every day is not to write a kick-ass story but to stay alive and make sure our Iraqi employees stay alive. In Baghdad I am a member of security personnel first, a reporter second (Sunday Times October 10, 2004).

[26] "Some journalists, however, believe that many correspondents are not sensitive enough when it comes to exposing their fixers to risk… Though fixers are often aware of the risks they are taking, some feel they are put in unfair positions… they often try to dissuade correspondents who ask to be taken to dangerous places but fear that they will lose their jobs to someone else if they decline altogether" (Witchel 2004:8).

(including local freelancers, stringers, and fixers) are properly equipped, trained and insured" (2004:4). This plea was made more than three years after the 'Joint code of practice' safety policy was formulated and adopted. The NewsExchange conference held in Portugal in 2004 devoted a session to a discussion on the safety of journalists, with a special focus on the protection of 'local hires'. None of this has led to formal revisions of the 'Joint code of practice'.[27]

9. Implementation and evaluation

The administration of a policy is more likely to succeed if it is broadly accepted and supported by all stakeholders, when they are motivated to support it, and when the policy is clear and simple to follow (Grindle 1980, Sharkansky 2002).

The 'Joint code of practice', however, exhibits features highlighted by the chaos paradigm, in that it does not specify how it is to be implemented apart from outlining that safety training, insurance and protective equipment should be provided to staff and freelancers.

As has been mentioned earlier in this chapter the policy also does not include any suggestions for how it could be reviewed. This was one of the clauses requested by the Gil Moreno de Mora family which had specified the need for: "A commitment to monitoring and, where necessary, modifying policies and procedures on an ongoing basis" (2000:2). What the policy rather states in this regard is: "We will work together to establish a databank of safety information, including the exchange of up to date safety assessments of hostile and dangerous areas" (2000:3). This is not the same thing as a review of the policy and it certainly leaves no possibility for the journalists themselves to formally help to assess it.

It does appear, however, as if news managers do monitor the policy and safety issues through a group of their peers in the NSG which consists of the London bureau chiefs of the American broadcast networks and representatives from Reuters TV, APTN,

[27] The International News Safety Institute has hosted debates on journalists safety at which the protection of freelancers is also discussed (INSI 2004).

BBC, Sky News and ITN. This is the group which drew up the safety guidelines which became the 'Joint code of practice'.[28]

It still meets regularly to discuss safety issues which impact on television news media, but ordinary television journalists whom the policy is supposed to help do not participate in these discussions. This reinforces the power paradigm's assertion that policy can sustain existing power relations. Two news executives who were involved in the formulation of the 'Joint code of practice' safety policy said in interviews for this study that there was no review process in place, with one assuming that "most organisations probably have their own reviews" (Cramer interview 2004) and another saying that there was no discussion when the policy was formulated about including details of a review procedure (Pinder interview 2004).

10. Conclusion

This chapter analysed in relation to policy theory the 'Joint code of practice' adopted *inter alia* by APTN and Reuters TV and found that a mix of policy paradigms highlights a range of significant features at play.

The policy's lack of provision for a review process and its lack of detail about how the various clauses are to be implemented, in the view of this study, leave the policy open to criticism from a power and a participatory perspective and ultimately weaken it as a document which aims to protect journalists on dangerous assignments. This further debilitates it from a functionalist perspective.

In order to establish the perceptions of the participants and targets of the policy, methods were chosen to be able to best access the views of these stakeholders. The next chapter outlines the methodology used in this research and explains the reasons for choosing to use certain methods over others. It expressly selected the methods that would result in being able to access information about the perceptions held by different actors in television news agencies about the policy processes. These methods were intended to

[28] A former Reuters TV Head of News, Rodney Pinder who is a member of the NSG explained how the 'Joint code of practice' was drawn up. "The guidelines were drafted by the then NSG chair, Richard Sambrook and circulated for additions/deletions/comments etc. by members. All members of the group had considerable experience of conflict reporting, so it did not take long to come up with the basic code, but it has an enormous depth of experience underlying it" (Pinder personal communication 2004).

elicit the particular meanings they draw from different aspects of the safety policy. The subsequent chapter casts light on the actual effectiveness of the policy.

Chapter Four

Methodology

1. Introduction

The previous chapters have argued that the perceptions of all actors in the policy process should be central to an examination of the genesis and implementation of the 'Joint code of practice' safety policy for journalists at APTN and Reuters TV. In this regard, the views were sought of both journalists who travel to dangerous assignments and managers who implement the policy. It is argued that the meaning derived from the participants themselves, through their personal observations, experiences and insights, is central to examining the effectiveness of policy.

In view of these goals, it was decided to employ, in terms of the concept of triangulation, both quantitative and qualitative research methods in the form of surveys and interviews, with both journalists and managers at the two agencies, about their views of the formulation, implementation and evaluation of the safety policy.

2. Methodology

2.1 Triangulation

Following Bryman (1988), Strelitz (2002), Flick (1998) and Deacon et al (1999), this research is designed on the basis of triangulation, a point of intense debate in research methodology between the proponents of quantitative and qualitative theories. Triangulation, which in this case is in two stages, encourages the use of more than one type of research methodology and accepts that it can be useful to use both quantitative and qualitative research methods in one study. In this regard, surveys – typically associated with quantitative research – are used, as well as the typically qualitative method of interviews. Both methods are used in recognition that they "not only have different strengths and weaknesses, but the strengths of one tend to be the weakness of the other" (Strelitz 2002:7).

While the traditionally quantitative method of surveys was used, only some of the data gathered in this way was counted, for example, how many journalists know about

the policy and adhere to it, etc. On the other hand, most of the information gleaned from the surveys which sought the respondents' perspectives on a range of issues, was treated qualitatively. Triangulation was further used in that the data gathered from the surveys, the interviews and an analysis of the policy document confirmed the results of each.

2.2 Quantitative and qualitative research

Quantitative research is underpinned by the mid-nineteenth century epistemological position of positivism which studies facts in order to "establish basic connections of cause and effect" (Deacon et al 1999:3-5). Qualitative research or the interpretive tradition, on the other hand, is based on the assumption of phenomenology which focuses on how people make sense of the world. It maintains that their behaviour should be studied from their own point of view, and that such analysis should try to see it through their eyes, rather than through the eyes of the researcher (Deacon 1999, Bryman 1988).

It is in recognition of the insight that qualitative research is seen as an "inquiry from the inside" as opposed to quantitative research's "enquiry from the outside" (Evered and Louis 1981, in Bryman 1988:3) that this study has chosen to rely, in the main, on qualitative research. It is a position which "is concerned with how the social world is interpreted, understood, experienced, produced or constituted" (Mason 2002:3). While it is acknowledged that the qualitative notion is limited by the view that reality is subjective and "exists only in reference to the observer" (Wimmer et al. 1991:139), it was chosen for its greater ability to help the researcher access detailed personal views of the respondents.

This chapter furthermore maintains that when information is collected from individuals about the meaning they attach to certain events and experiences, it would result in richer data (Lindlof 1995) and deeper insights than would be likely to be obtained from a reliance on quantitative methods (Deacon 1999). This study has sought the views of the respondents on the meaning they give to the safety policy which fits with qualitative research which is used to understand:

> [P]erspectives on a scene, to retrieve experiences from the past, to gain expert insight or information, to obtain descriptions of events or scenes that are normally

> unavailable for observation, to foster trust, to understand a sensitive or intimate relationship, or to analyze certain kinds of discourse (Lindlof 1995:5).

It also spells out the process used to identify the journalist respondents for this study, who were selected from a pool of full-time and freelance television producers and camera operators. As it was noted previously in this study, television news agencies do not use on-camera reporters since their broadcast clients who pay for their video footage use their own correspondents to tell the story according to their own programming style.

These television news agency camera operators and producers generally do all the journalistic work necessary to cover a news assignment. However, there are cases where camera operators are assigned to cover a story on their own and need the skills to be able to find the images to illustrate a story, to know whom to approach for comment, to be able to interview them, to edit the material and to transmit it to their headquarters in London for distribution to the agencies' broadcast clients. Since they essentially do journalistic work, both camera operators and producers are referred to in this study as 'journalist respondents'. Freelance camera operators and producers were also surveyed about how they perceive the policy to benefit them.

The 'manager respondents' used in this study include people in managerial positions at the two agencies who had a role in either helping to formulate the policy or to implement it, or both.

Freelance drivers, translators and fixers were not interviewed for this study, mainly because of the logistical problems in identifying and contacting them, coupled with the element of time pressure. These freelancers are often referred to by the agencies as 'local hires' or 'support staff', and are typically hired on an *ad hoc* basis by television agency journalists on their arrival at dangerous assignments. The views about their safety were sought from both the full-time and freelance journalists interviewed.

It is the opinion of this researcher that further studies should be undertaken into the safety of these categories of freelancers to further contribute to the growing initiative to provide them with increased protection and insurance cover.

3. Suiting methods to goals

This study aimed to examine a range of issues around the "safety guidelines" for journalists including events leading to its formulation and adoption, and an examination

of whether and how it was implemented by the two news agencies. Another enterprise was to review its usefulness to the journalists it purports to protect by establishing their perceptions of the policy and the way in which it is implemented. It was therefore accepted that survey questionnaires, commonly a quantitative research method, were a useful tool to gauge opinions (Wimmer and Dominik 1991, in Strelitz 2002) or to provide "a snapshot" of what people think or believe (Hansen et al 1998:257).

The qualitative research method of the interview, on the other hand, is more useful in discovering why journalists think as they do about the policy which was ostensibly made in their interests. The interview was also a useful way of finding out about the perceptions of the managers who either participated in making it or were supposed to be part of implementing it. This follows the argument that the choice of method should be governed by the "objectives of your research and by what is practicable" (Deacon 1999:70).

Apart from being able to glean more sensitive and richer data about meanings derived by the participants in the development and implementation of this policy, qualitative methods are also better at investigating questions of power. They are accepted as being "more suitable than quantitative methods for addressing certain questions about culture, interpretation and power" (Lindlof 1995:10). The survey questionnaire used in this study, however, included a range of qualitative questions which sought to elicit deeper answers from the respondents.

It was necessary to investigate why this safety policy was made, noting that there are a variety of reasons why a problem, an opportunity or a challenge for example, is identified as a policy issue, in whose interest the policy was formulated and by whom. This acknowledges that there is frequently no clear process in the making of policy and that it is often as a result of the motivations of a wide variety of people (Lindblom 1968). It was therefore regarded as essential to consult both managers and journalists of the two organisations and ask them to answer questions as frankly and as openly as possible.

From a functionalist perspective it was expected that those whom the policy purports to protect would be adequately informed about it, if not consulted about their views on what such a policy should include. This study therefore examined whether and how it was communicated to the journalist respondents who are sent into the field on

dangerous news assignments and how they understand this policy. This research further investigated whether the journalist respondents regarded the safety policy as something which is helpful to them, or on the other hand, whether they believe it hinders them, or whether it has no impact at all.

The participatory approach to policy highlights the issue of whether the journalist respondents were consulted in its formulation, implementation and review and in line with this approach this study investigated whether that had indeed occurred and when and how such consultation took place. Where respondents indicated that they had participated in such processes they were asked to provide details both of how they came to be involved and about their perspective of the processes. Management respondents were also asked about the existence of any review or evaluation process and their insights about whether such assessment was necessary and how, if it exists, it functions. Other choices were made about which methods and techniques to employ in researching this question as evident in the next section.

4. Methods, procedures and techniques

The advantages and disadvantages of different research methods were considered before a decision was made about which to use in this research (Hazel 2001). Three main methods of collecting interview data are by post, telephone and face-to-face interviews according to Comstock and McCombs (in Stempel and Westley 1981). Since they were writing before the widespread use of email communication in the early-1990s, their views on interviewing by post, it is argued, should be taken to include interviewing by electronic mail (email). Distributing interview questionnaires by post is the least expensive and the most convenient method for geographically dispersed populations but its main disadvantage is the absence of control over the interview once it has been posted. (Deacon 1999). Some of the disadvantages of interviews by post are counteracted by certain characteristics of email which is potentially a more immediate form of communication than that of the postal system and therefore may afford the researcher more control over the interviewing process. The researcher who interviews by email is further not necessarily required to wait until a reply arrives by post, and can email or telephone reminders to the respondent to complete the questionnaire which, once

completed and sent can be received within minutes. Emailing also allows for quicker communication about problems the respondent may experience, as well as requests for further information. This is, of course, providing that the respondent has access to email at that time, or is not sent on an assignment which may interfere with his or her availability, and that the respondent is willing to participate. Another advantage of interviewing by email is that the respondent could answer some of the questions and if he or she has to leave for an assignment, they return to answering the emailed questions at later stage.

A less important weakness of this method is that the length of the questionnaire is limited, although it could be that people such as television agency journalists who are used to communicating by email, might be more amenable to writing their answers more quickly than those who are not and would therefore not be averse to answering more questions. Both television news agencies use email, as well as the telephone, to communicate with their staff although, as indicated earlier, one cannot assume that all these emails are actually read. Another disadvantage of this method was the trend that people do not always open email attachments out of concern that they may carry computer viruses. In some cases respondents had to be contacted several times to assure them that the attachment containing the interview questions could be opened safely and on occasion, the questionnaire had to be re-sent in the body of an email.

Telephone interviews are more expensive and can therefore be limited in length, should cost be an issue, but this method can be more flexible than email interviews as the researcher can interject and ask additional questions or add to, or clarify questions more easily (Comstock and McCombs, in Stempel and Westley 1981). Telephonic interviews have nevertheless also been used in this research as an additional method where a respondent either appeared reluctant to answer by email, or where they did not have immediate access to email or when clarification of answers was required, and in some cases to ensure that follow-up answers were received. This method was also used in the case of several respondents who were taking a long time to answer, to help gather all the data on time.

A web-based survey tool (www.surveymonkey.com) was used to design and distribute the survey questionnaire as well as to analyse parts of the responses. This was

done in the recognition that Computer Assisted Interviewing (CAI) is useful in that it "motivates the respondent to provide the most honest and accurate information possible, with minimal burden" (Couper and Hansen, in Gubrium and Holstein 2003).

Face-to-face interviewing was also used as often as possible in this study in recognition of one of its main advantages which:

> [A]lso permits the coverage of a far wider range of material than either the mail or the telephone interview. People do not become bored or impatient as quickly with another person as they do with a questionnaire or disembodied voice. The face-to-face interview thereby takes a maximum advantage of the occasion to collect information (Comstock and McCombs, in Stempel and Westley 1981:148).

Since both APTN and Reuters TV have their head offices in London and because many of their staff work there or in bureaus around the world and since television agency journalists travel away from their bases on assignment, it was expected that most of the respondents would be in countries other than South Africa where the researcher was based. Where respondents were either living in South Africa or visiting that country, they mostly participated in face-to-face semi-structured interviews, which provided space for the interviewer to elaborate when necessary (Bryman 1988, Deacon 1999, Fontana and Frey 1994). It also provided another avenue of expression for those respondents who were more comfortable talking than writing. Being able to do face-to-face interviews also helped to reduce any potential feelings of alienation by the respondent (Deacon 1999). In addition, where respondents were in South Africa but in a place that the researcher could not personally visit, due to time and or cost constraints, they were interviewed by email and or by telephone.

Interviews were conducted with journalists and managers in ten countries using a combination of email, telephonic and face-to-face interviews. The interviews were of a semi-structured nature to take advantage of the method's ability to better obtain detailed descriptions and in order to analyse a person's behaviour from their own point of view (Bryman 1988). This assisted the respondents to more easily elaborate on their answers and to offer examples and anecdotes in a more flexible atmosphere in which the interviewer could also develop the interview to accommodate or explain any new issues

that may have arisen. Efforts were made when email and telephonic interviews were conducted, to follow a similar interview procedure and in this regard all the respondents were initially given the same set of open and closed response questions.

Space was provided in the emailed questionnaires for respondents to expand on their answers to each open response question. All respondents were further encouraged to elaborate as much as possible on their answers and to provide anecdotes where relevant. Journalist respondents were given one set of questions and management respondents received another to take into account their different roles in the policy-making and implementation processes.[29] These initial sets of questions were followed by more in-depth questions which arose from their responses.

The two lists of initial survey questions, for journalists and managers, were designed and then pre-tested on similar target groups and revised where any discrepancies or questions emerged, before they were administered to the two groups of respondents. This piloting process sought to identify areas where the questions were not comprehensible, to establish any ambiguity, and to test whether the ordering of the questions allowed the respondents to be comfortable and in order to be able to deal with any other problems in advance (Comstock and McCombs, in Stempel and Westley 1981, Deacon 1999, Hansen 1998). Once the initial responses were analysed, all the respondents were contacted for more in-depth, follow-up questions. Not all of them, however, answered these questions for variety of reasons including because one was sent on assignment, another was too busy and in another case a respondent ignored the questions.

After 14 years working for one of the agencies, as a writer and then as a senior television producer, the researcher was able to draw from a depth of experience and a range of contacts of journalists working in the field for both television news agencies and broadcasters as well as with people in managerial positions in the media. In order to assist her in the process of identifying journalist respondents she sought the advice of two leading television managers, both based in South Africa. One was Jimi Matthews, the Head of News of SABC Television, and a former manager and journalist with Reuters

[29] In certain places the wording of some of the questions for the full-time and freelance journalists was necessarily slightly different. The questionnaires can be found in appendices IV, V and VI.

TV. He had experience covering dangerous assignments for Reuters TV. The other was Milton Nkosi, the BBC's Africa Bureaux Chief who, throughout his career, which included his work as a producer in the field on dangerous assignments, had regular and close contact with journalists from both APTN and Reuters TV. As the person in charge of all BBC coverage and staff in Africa, he is also responsible for ensuring the safety of these journalists.

These two experts were consulted by means of face-to-face, semi-structured interviews which resulted in invaluable insights used to shape the criteria for selecting the journalist and manager respondents for this study. They were interviewed in Johannesburg in September and October 2004 respectively and their advice resulted in them agreeing with, and in some cases amending, the researcher's criteria for respondents. They accepted the criteria that respondents should include two managers from each of the two agencies who could provide insights on the implementation and review of the policy. They further agreed that journalist respondents should have covered dangerous assignments to which they had to travel in order for this study to include the element of haste in undertaking a range of preparations for such a trip at short notice. This would impact on the time they had to reflect on whether they wanted to accept the assignment or not. It was further decided to include this element because, as noted in the previous chapter, when television news agency journalists travel to dangerous assignments outside the area in which they live, they routinely hire drivers, translators and fixers.

5. Respondents

The journalist respondents were selected through a combination of non-random quota sampling, snowball sampling and convenience sampling (Deacon 1999). They were initially selected from the list of criteria drawn up in consultation with the experts, about issues likely to be important to the study.

It was agreed with the two experts that the journalist respondents should be producers or camera operators, full-time and freelance, who work or who have worked with Reuters TV or APTN and who would have been assigned to cover news, by either of the two news agencies. This work should be able to be described as dangerous or

potentially dangerous, such as armed conflict, and it would not exclude, and also not specifically include, natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods, and cylones. An initial criterion was that the respondents should have worked for either company six to nine months after the official adoption of the safety guidelines in November 2000, to allow time for this policy to be communicated to them and to begin to be implemented. It was further accepted that the views should be sought of journalists who worked for either agency between May 2000, when Miguel Gil Moreno de Mora and Kurt Schork were killed, and November 2000 when the policy was officially adopted, in order to assess whether they had been involved in the formulation of the safety policy. Most of the journalist respondents included in this study could be regarded as experienced in that they had all been working in the profession and mainly for one of the agencies for at least the last four years, and in many cases, longer. In addition, both experts suggested that freelance journalists regularly hired by these companies for dangerous assignments, should also be included in this study as they are subject to the same working conditions as full-time journalists and because the safety measures in the 'Joint code of practice' are also aimed at freelancers (Matthews 2004, Nkosi 2004). Interviews with such freelancers, in some cases, added unexpected insights to this study, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

The reason for interviewing journalists who worked for one of the agencies at the time the research was conducted, as well as those who are no longer employed by the companies, is that it was expected that those former staff may be more willing to discuss the policy and their relationship with it than those who were still employed by one of the agencies. It was felt that the former employees might, therefore, yield more candid responses.

It should be pointed out here that one of the journalist respondents interviewed for this study is the researcher's husband, Claude Colart who is a former APTN journalist. Among the reasons for including him as a respondent in this study is that he was approached by managers of the agency for his opinion on safety considerations which speaks to the participation of journalists in the policy-making process. Other reasons for his selection include his experience in covering dangerous assignments. His willingness to participate in this study and his availability were also decisive factors in his selection

as well as the fact that he was employed by APTN during the time of Gil Moreno de Mora's death and for more than a year after the policy was adopted.

It was intended that ten journalists from each agency participate in this research, which would be roughly 7.5 percent to 10 percent of those who cover dangerous assignments. APTN has estimated that 75 to 100 of its camera operators and producers regularly travel on assignment for them, many of them dangerous (news agency manager 2004). It is expected that Reuters TV has the same or similar numbers. The possibility was considered at the beginning of the research that should half of the sample be unable to continue in the study or be unable to participate at all, it would leave five per news agency, i.e. approximately five percent of the agencies' journalist staff who travel to dangerous assignments. This was considered to be an acceptable number, taking into account that "there are no definitive guidelines" about the numbers of respondents in both quantitative and qualitative research (Deacon 1999:43). It is further recognised that it is "impossible to survey literally every person" (Hansen 1998:230) and that compromises often have to be made in selecting a sample.

Ultimately 30 journalists were approached and 20 participated in this research: eight full-time journalists from Reuters TV and eight from APTN; and four freelancers (three who worked mainly for APTN and one with Reuters). Twelve managers were approached and six responded: four from APTN and two from Reuters TV. Of these six one manager expressed concerns over anonymity and the responses of another arrived too late for inclusion, thus their responses were used only as background. Responses from two APTN and the two Reuters TV managers were included in the findings of this research.

The relatively small size of the samples used in this research, is not considered to be problematic since the most of the insights used emanated from the qualitative aspects of this study.[30]

In order to find journalists and managers who were willing and available to participate in this study, the snowball sampling method was also used in some cases (Deacon 1999) where some of the respondents initially selected suggested others. In

[30] Deacon et al explain that much qualitative research is "less concerned with generating an *extensive* perspective … than in providing *intensive* insights into complex human and social phenomena in highly specific circumstances (1999:43).

addition, some of the respondents were selected through weak convenience sampling where participants were approached because they were already known to the researcher (Deacon 1999:54). This was balanced, however, by the use of quota sampling and snowball sampling, when journalists and managers not previously known to the researcher, were also selected. In most cases the researcher was not aware, in advance, of respondents' level of participation in the policy process and certainly not of their specific views about its implementation.

Similarly management respondents were selected in terms of non-random quota sampling, snowball and convenience sampling, with criteria for selection being that at least one of the two managers interviewed from each agency would have had to be in its employ at the time when the policy was formulated and adopted. The other manager should have worked at either agency between six and nine months after the policy was officially adopted i.e. between November 2000 and May 2001.

The Reuters TV manager respondents included a regional manager and one based the company's headquarters in London. The two APTN managers interviewed were both based at the company's London headquarters.

Since most of the journalist respondents and all of the managers indicated that they wanted to remain anonymous, they were all allocated randomly generated case numbers which indicated only the category of respondent into which they belonged.

An additional face-to-face semi-structured interview was conducted in June 2004 with the Managing Director of CNN International, Chris Cramer, who was in South Africa on business. He was interviewed because of his role in helping to formulate safety guidelines for the BBC in the 1990s, his participation in formulating the safety guidelines under discussion, and because he is the Honorary President of the International News Safety Institute (INSI) which was established in 2003 and whose guiding document is based on these safety guidelines.

A further interview was conducted (in June 2004) with Rodney Pinder, a former Head of News at Reuters TV and presently the Director of INSI. He was interviewed primarily because of his experience at Reuters TV and because he was part of the group of news executives which formulated the safety policy in September 2000. That interview was conducted by email since he is based in Brussels, Belgium. He answered an initial

set of questions which were emailed to him and several follow-up questions which arose from his initial answers.

Another face-to-face semi-structured interview was conducted (in October 2004) with Terry Leonard, the Associated Press' Bureau Chief for southern Africa, who had himself been assigned to cover many conflicts throughout the world and who has experience of his staff's safety being jeopardised for a range of reasons, including because of what he believes as the wrong people being assigned to cover news in a combat zone. He had also been involved in suggesting safety initiatives to the print arm of The AP after APTN had participated in the formulation of the 'Joint code of practice' in 2000.

6. Questions

Following Deacon's argument about the importance of the phrasing of questions because they "influence the answers you get and the conclusions you reach", the questionnaires and interview guides used in this study were carefully designed in order to ensure that the questions were clear and unambiguous. It was considered important to attempt to structure the questionnaires as if they were a natural conversation (Deacon 1999) and to regard the semi-structured interview as a conversation with a purpose, with the interviewer retaining control of the discussion, while referring to an interview guide to ensure that all the essential questions were covered (Lindlof 1995).

The questionnaires completed by both the journalist and manager respondents initially took the form of some closed-response questions and mainly open-response questions which were ordered in a way so as to avoid alienating the respondents. Each respondent was sent a copy of the 'Joint code of practice' with their questions.

The interviews started with more general and less threatening and challenging questions and were designed to be sensitive in order to gain the trust of the respondents before expecting them to answer questions about their beliefs and attitudes (Deacon 1999). Open response questions dominated the initial interviews as well as the follow-up interviews, in order to obtain richer, more sensitive insights into the respondents' views (Deacon 1999). It was expected that this type of questioning would generate answers

which would be more difficult to summarise in the analysis stage of the research. This issue is discussed later in this chapter.

Questions related to the institutionalised demand for video footage which is prevalent in both the agencies and television broadcasters were also included, and were asked in relation to whether journalists perceive themselves as being able to balance issues of safety with those of competition with the other agency. Managers were asked, for example, whether they believed it was realistic, in the context of the competitive pressure, to allow journalists to refuse dangerous assignments.

7. Ethical Issues

This study acknowledges the importance of conducting research according to ethical standards both of Rhodes University and those articulated by social science research theorists.

All the respondents gave their consent to participate in this study and most took up the option of remaining anonymous. They understood that the purpose was to explore issues surrounding the operation of safety policy within television news agencies. It was further explained to all respondents that this study might be published elsewhere and might therefore become accessible to people outside of Rhodes University. The respondents who elected to remain anonymous were given the assurance according to the university's ethical guidelines that their identity would be "strictly protected" (Duncan 2004:5). They were also informed that while the study may be made available for wider consumption for a different purpose (2004:6), their identities would continue to be protected. Some respondents, who elected to be named in this study, asked that certain parts of the answers be used without their names attached. Such requests were honoured. The experts consulted, however, were not averse to being named.

Another ethical question faced by social scientists is how much information they are obliged to provide about their research "in order to solicit the co-operation of participants" (Greenberg in Stempel and Westley 1981:259). This study was conducted with the awareness that television news agencies had been previously criticised for alleged practices which, it has been suggested, may have negatively impacted on the safety of their staff and that they might, therefore, be sensitive about participating. After

interviewing colleagues and managers of Miguel Gil Moreno de Mora and Kurt Schork after they were killed in an ambush in Sierra Leone, for example, journalist Peter Maas wrote an article speculating about what could have persuaded Gil Moreno de Mora to drive into an area he felt was unsafe the day he and Schork were killed. He observed:

> APTN was beaten by Reuters when Sankoh, the rebel leader who had been hiding in Freetown, was seized and taken into detention. Reuters quickly uploaded footage of crowds celebrating his capture. APTN had nothing. For several hours APTN editors outside Sierra Leone were unable to reach their team. According to four journalists I spoke with, the British Broadcasting Corporation, a major APTN client, complained about the lack of footage. Editors at APTN in London were livid. While their team in Sierra Leone had performed splendidly since the war had ignited, the fact remained: Reuters had beaten them. (2001:4).

Furthermore, while still employed by APTN in 2001, the researcher had initiated informal discussions with managers about safety policy and about the 'Joint code of practice' which she had discovered independently of any company communiqué, months after the policy was adopted. It is for this reason that, while acknowledging that qualitative research involves bias (Hamel 1993), she made every effort to demonstrate to the respondents that they were participating in academic research which did not prejudge the issue or the results. The trust in the process exhibited by most journalist respondents and the openness by the managers convinced her that she had succeeded in this task.

The researcher further recognises that her participation in MA course work which covers aspects of academic research provided her with the tools to ensure that her work was thorough. In this regard methods were chosen to ensure that the respondents own opinions on safety issues were expressed and recorded and not those of the researcher. She further recognised that the research was likely to result in some unexpected findings which did happen and these are recorded and discussed in the next chapter.

8. Analysis

In order to ensure the validity of both the methodologies used and the interpretation of the data, the approach to this research ensured that the methods suited the goals of the research. For instance, in order to establish the perceptions of all the participants in the

policy process at the two television agencies, the researcher surveyed and interviewed a representative sample of both journalists and managers.

Once the initial surveys were completed and their results were computer analysed by www.surveymonkey.com, codes or category schemes were also drawn up, which "may be more appropriate than any preordained scheme conceived at the start of the research" (Deacon 1999:79). This thematic coding was formulated to "identify, compare and contrast meaning elements, as they emerge from and recur in several different contexts" (Jensen 1982:251).

In analysing the answers to the questionnaires and the follow-up questions, the researcher identified the respondents by their case numbers as indicated earlier in this chapter, in order to avoid being biased. After coding and analysing the initial responses, and in order to further examine points they had made, the researcher then followed-up with more in-depth questions which most of the respondents answered. Grounded theory, based on the idea that theory is grounded in data (Melia, in Miller and Dingwall 1997), suggests that coding allows for analysis throughout the process using codes to read the data and to select themes from it (Charmaz, in Holstein and Gubrium 2003). This process feeds into follow-up interviewing in that it "can lead the researcher in unanticipated directions; for example, the researcher might find that he or she needs to obtain new kinds of data from the participants or to increase the interview sample to include another type of participant" (Charmaz, in Holstein and Gubrium 2003:320).

In analysing the data, heed was taken of Deacon's (1999) warning that one should digest the results and to expect that while in certain instances they might conform to the researcher's expectations, some may throw up tensions. In this latter event, Deacon argues that the researcher should "resist the temptation" to rectify the findings (1999:131) or to select quotes subjectively which, it can be argued, is not possible in quantitative research which is preoccupied with objective facts (Gomm et al 2000).

It is further recognised that if the researcher is involved in an interpretive reading of the data, it will mean analysing the data in terms of his or her own interpretations as well as those of the respondent (Mason 2002). In this regard researchers should also decide how far they are willing to go with a reflexive reading of the data noting that it "will locate you as part of the data … and will seek to explore your role and perspective

in the process of generation and interpretation of data" (Mason 2002:149). In this study the researcher accepted that her knowledge of and experience working in a television news agency was likely to have such an effect. While this is acknowledged, it is not suggested that it impacted on the results. Instead it has meant that she was already equipped with background knowledge which allowed her to approach the data with a deeper understanding of the subject.

In this regard, the researcher adopted an approach of "active reflexivity" (Mason 2002:7) in which she took into account her own role in gathering and analysing the data and examined it rigorously. It is accepted that with reflexivity comes a responsibility on the part of the researcher to recognise the complexity and differences in the data (Spencer 2001, in Mason 2002) and that:

> [T]his sense of responsibility can be a source of liberation, rather than simply an unwelcome burden; it is now possible to write extraordinarily readable ethnographies which are quite open about their limitations and partiality, and which manage to acknowledge the complexity of the world, and thus the difficulty of rendering it through words on a page, without sacrificing coherence or clarity (Spencer 2001:450 in Mason 2002:194).

Researchers cannot be neutral, objective and unbiased in qualitative research but, as has been discussed in this section, are instead able to locate and understand their role in the research process (Mason 2002) without imposing their own position onto data gathered from respondents. This reflexivity, on the other hand, can afford researchers a deeper understanding of the data and what it means.

9. Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the methodological choices in pursuing this research and has attempted to explain why both quantitative and qualitative methodologies were used and why more emphasis was given to qualitative techniques of interviewing which have been considered the most valuable way in which to obtain detailed information from the respondents about what this policy means to them.

It has found that the use of the qualitative method of semi-structured interviewing, whether face-to-face, by telephone or by email, has allowed the researcher to gather rich

data about the respondents' own perceptions of the formulation and implementation of the safety policy. This method allowed space for both the respondents and the interviewer to elaborate as well for the respondents to be able to offer deeper insights with which to illustrate or emphasise their responses.

An important aspect of this chapter was its focus of the potential role of power in the creation and implementation of this policy. This became another reason why the focus in this research was on qualitative methods which were seen as more useful than quantitative methods in allowing respondents to describe how they understood the formulation, implementation and review of the policy based on their perceptions of the power relations and the political economies in which they operate. It also explained the reasons for using a variety of sampling strategies to select respondents who would be more likely to be able to offer valuable information and insights on their involvement in the policy-making process at either of the two television news agencies.

This chapter further included a report on the researcher's compliance with a range of ethical standards including informing all respondents that they were not obliged to be named in this study, or in any future versions of it, to ensure their participation and to allow them to answer questions as frankly and openly as possible.

The next chapter will discuss the findings reached from both management and journalist respondents who work or worked for either APTN or Reuters TV during the time the policy was formulated or after the safety guidelines were drawn up and officially adopted, or both.

Chapter Five

Findings

1. Introduction

The findings of this research are first discussed broadly in terms of the overall perceptions offered by the journalist and manager respondents and the journalists' awareness of the policy. The findings are then elaborated upon in relation to three aspects of the 'Joint code of practice' safety policy: journalists' access to safety training and safety equipment and whether they refuse dangerous assignments. The findings are then discussed in relation to several themes researched in this study, namely; their perception of whether it helps them or not; their ability to balance safety with competitiveness; their participation in the formulation, implementation and review of the policy; and safety measures for freelancers.

Finally there is a discussion of significant differences in the perceptions of journalists and managers from different agencies and those of freelance and full-time agency journalists.

As was mentioned in the previous chapter, all the respondents were sent a copy of the 'Joint code of practice' safety policy with the questionnaires.

2. Findings in general

a. All journalists

This research has found that just over half of the 20 journalist respondents interviewed had not previously seen the safety policy called the 'Joint code of practice', while most nonetheless knew about and followed most of the elements contained in the policy. Only a quarter of the journalists who said that they had seen the policy document, said they had been informed of it by their employers.

The majority of the journalists were aware of most of the elements contained in the policy. Those aspects of the policy about which the least was known were that journalists in conflict zones should be supervised by an experienced colleague and that the agencies provided and encouraged psychological counselling.

The agencies appear to generally follow the clause which says that they should send journalists on safety training courses, but not the one which suggests that they also be sent on refresher safety courses, despite the fact that the policy maintains it should be made mandatory. Awareness amongst the journalist respondents about their right to this retraining is significantly low with only three of those interviewed knowing about this.

Some journalists supported some parts of the policy, some others. For example, journalists' belief that the safety training has improved their safety in the field was high with three-quarters of those surveyed saying that it does. Half of them held that complying with the safety policy as a whole would help them in their jobs. However, the level of consultation by managers with journalists about the safety policy, either before it was drawn up or afterwards, was found to have been extremely low (i.e. two out of twenty journalists were consulted). As mentioned in Chapter 4 since most of the journalists who took part in this research were employed by the respective television agencies at the time the policy was formulated and adopted, it was expected that they ought to have known more about it than those more recently hired.

While the level of consultation about the policy was low, there was nevertheless a high level of interest amongst journalist respondents in being consulted about this policy. In follow-up interviews, journalists suggested changes they would make to the policy and its implementation should they be asked to participate in its review. These are discussed later in this chapter.

As mentioned in Chapter 4 a small sample of journalists was used in this research, and although this study is focused on "providing *intensive* insights" (Deacon et al 1999:45) care was nevertheless taken not to extrapolate generalisations from the findings. These results are, however, significant for the policy issues involved. For example, as will be seen in this chapter, the perceptions of this small sample of 20 journalists, indicates the contribution that can be made from consultative policy.

Most of the journalists interviewed for this study said they are provided with bullet-proof vests when going on a dangerous assignment. However, they do not always wear them when in the field on such an assignment. Providing journalists with first aid kits, on the other hand, is not as extensive. While this is not a specific provision in the

policy, the findings show that the most highlighted aspect of the safety training course which most of the respondents had attended is on battlefield first aid.

Journalists appear to be taking up their right under the policy to refuse dangerous assignments and those who have done so did not report direct negative repercussions as a result. Some did, however, question whether there might be consequences for their careers in the long term. Significantly while journalists are aware of the option of turning down assignments they believe to be too risky, they also make excuses and sometimes lie to get out of going on a dangerous assignment or to leave one early.

The competition between the two news agencies and how it is encouraged by head office staff, and fuelled by younger, less experienced journalists, is perceived by the journalists in this research as negatively impacting on their ability to adhere to safety precautions.

In addition, these findings show that journalists are concerned about the safety and insurance arrangements for freelancers such as drivers, translators and fixers who are hired by the agencies on an *ad hoc* basis. The issue of the safety of freelancers and their access to training, safety equipment and insurance cover will be discussed later in this chapter.

b. Managers

Two managers from each agency were interviewed and two reported having been involved either directly or indirectly in the formulation of the 'Joint code of practice'. According to them, the document was either distributed to all staff or those assigned to cover dangerous assignments. They also reported that producers and camera operators were consulted about the 'Joint code of practice' either before or after its formulation. (The discrepancy between their accounts and those of the journalists is discussed later in this chapter). While they did not specify which, or how many journalists were approached, it appears that managers had selected those with whom to consult, rather than opening the consultation process to all journalist staff.

Furthermore, all managers reported that the agencies for which they work have processes by which the safety policy is reviewed, although they did not provide details of these processes. One said, however, that the policy was under review in 2004 for the first

time since its adoption in late 2000. There were some differences between the responses of managers from the same company. For example one reported that managers were responsible for reviewing the safety policy and his colleague said it was done by a range of editorial staff.

All the managers interviewed said that they believed it was realistic, notwithstanding competitive pressures, to allow journalists to refuse dangerous assignments. Most of them said that journalists on their staff had done so.[31] None of the managers interviewed, however, showed awareness that their journalists sometimes made excuses to avoid a dangerous assignment, with most saying this was not done and with one manager saying he did not know. Another manager said journalists did not make such excuses because they knew they were entitled to refuse dangerous assignments.

The managers were, however, divided on whether drivers, fixers and translators could be regarded as freelancers and covered by the safety policy. Three of them reported that freelance camera operators and journalists were sent on safety training courses. Two managers said that journalists who worked for their agencies were required to take extra safety equipment on dangerous assignments for freelancers to use, while most of the journalist respondents said that they were not given such equipment for freelancers.

None of the managers said that freelancers were required to sign a contract for insurance purposes to prove that they had been employed by the agency. One said, however, that his agency was obliged to inform its insurers about whom they had hired.

c. Freelancers

While journalists were asked about their perceptions on the protection of drivers, fixers and translators hired by the television news agencies on a freelance basis, only camera operators and producers from amongst freelancers were interviewed for this study. This was because drivers, translators and fixers are typically hired on a one-off basis by journalists when they arrive on an assignment in a conflict zone. Most of the four

[31] One manager, who initially said he was not aware that journalists on his staff had refused a dangerous assignment, said that if the question was worded differently he would have answered in the affirmative. He said he would agree if the question asked was: "has a decision been reached not to go on an assignment or to travel on some aspect of an assignment because it is deemed too dangerous, either by those in the field or by their editors" (F767 survey response). It is unclear why this change in terminology was so important to him.

freelancers interviewed were not trained, but they said they did receive safety equipment. The issue of freelancers is discussed in more depth later in this chapter.

d. Awareness of policy

The findings of this research show that while only eight of the 20 journalists interviewed for this study said they had seen the 'Joint code of practice' document, most knew about most of the elements contained in it. They said they had heard about them from conversations with colleagues, "through the grapevine", reading articles and items on the internet as well as having been informed by senior colleagues and, in only a few cases, from agency managers.

Of these journalists four said it had been distributed to them by the company, or that they had seen it on a company website. The other four who had seen it said they had been shown it by friends or colleagues who had seen it published in non-corporate publications.

The safety elements contained in the 'Joint code of practice' of which most journalist respondents were aware included: that they should not take unwarranted risks; that they should have personal insurance while working in conflict zones and that no member of the media may carry a firearm. In addition, they displayed the awareness that they are entitled to have safety training; that they must be given safety equipment; and that they may refuse a dangerous assignment. These latter three issues are discussed in the sections below.

3. Safety training

While all of the 16 full-time agency journalists interviewed said they had undergone safety training, only one said he had been on a refresher course in safety which the policy promotes. One full-time agency journalist linked the fact that he had not been offered a refresher safety training course to financial considerations by the news agency for which he worked.[32]

[32] "Most of these companies are more worried about the costs because it costs them to fly us there, to stay there. I think they are more worried about that than about our safety because I don't understand why they should choose who should go for training, (and) who should not go. If it was in their best interests

Most of the journalists who had had safety training were taught in an intensive five-day course in England known amongst journalists as 'the Centurion course' or the 'Centurion Hostile Environments Course'.[33] While most of the journalists said they believe that this training had improved their safety in the field, just under a quarter said either that it had not, or that they were unsure whether it had. One journalist who had done the Centurion course in 2000 said he could not remember much of what he had been taught. He said the course had been:

> [T]heoretical, brief and a long time ago. I can't remember most of what was said. The world has changed and in war zones, journalists are targets. In the Iraq war the number of journalists killed by friendly bombing was huge. Journalists are taken hostage, killed and beaten. I think the dangers facing journalists in certain areas are greater and more unpredictable than any Centurion course could prevent (D415 follow-up interview 2004).

Another respondent explained that one could not learn in "a handful of days" what it takes professionals years to learn, but that this problem could be countered somewhat by undergoing a refresher course every two years (B952 survey response 2004). One of the journalist respondents who said he did not know if it had improved his safety said he had learnt "nothing new" on the course (A989 follow-up interview 2004).

Another said he believed that the television companies were "forced" into offering safety training "because of people dying and (them) starting to think 'what if?'" (B669 follow-up interview 2004). One journalist perceived the efforts made by news agencies in providing safety equipment and safety training as being for insurance purposes. The issue of the insurance of journalists in the case of their death or injury is discussed in the next chapter.

The journalists who said they believed that the training had improved their safety in the field mainly cited the first aid aspect of the course and the kidnapping exercise as

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everybody, whether you will be going to Iraq or not, should know these things" (A259 follow-up interview 2004).

[33] The safety course is taught by former British Royal Marine commandos employed by the British company Centurion Risk Assessment Services Ltd. At a cost of about $2 000 a person (CPJ 2004) the fees are paid for by the agencies, which also cover the cost of journalists' travel to England and their sundry expenses. The course, which this researcher completed in 2001, includes *inter alia* training in first aid, how to behave if taken hostage, weapons capability, how to react when under fire and basic navigation.

having been particularly helpful. This finding is also significant in relation to the discussion in the provision of safety equipment in the next section.

A journalist whose company had sent him on a safety training course in 2000 said he had been told by senior staff at the head office that he would go on a refresher course every two years. This, he said, was also told to him by trainers but that he had nevertheless not been asked to go on a refresher course (D415 follow-up interview 2004). Another said he was "never asked and was never told, at least not by management. If offered I would welcome the opportunity to attend" (B952 follow-up interview 2004). One journalist said that while he was "never asked" said he had only heard that the BBC was offering its staff refresher courses (D965 follow-up interview 2004) and another said he did not know that such a course was available (B276 follow-up interview 2004). The issue of retraining in safety is analysed in Chapter 6.

4. Safety equipment

Most of the journalist respondents reported that they are always given bullet-proof vests when they are assigned to a dangerous story and just over half said they always received helmets. Significantly, less than half the number of journalists who participated in this research said they were always given first aid kits and about the same number reported that they never received them. The provision of other safety equipment including stab vests, gas masks and armoured vehicles varied considerably, which is most likely dependent on the perceived specific needs of an assignment, rather than being standard equipment issued to all journalists. Most of the journalists said they automatically received safety equipment when going on a dangerous assignment.

While the 'Joint code of practice' does not require that journalists on dangerous assignments actually wear bullet-proof vests, only that they are given them, the findings of this research show that most wear them only 'sometimes' on such assignments. This finding further highlights the complex nature of the much-debated concept of rationality, for instance, while it is rational in terms of this policy to wear bullet-proof vests on dangerous assignments, it is also rational for the journalists not to always wear them. For example, of the various reasons given by journalists for not wearing their bullet-proof vests on dangerous assignments, most were related to the potential security or criminal

risk. They included perceptions that the jackets made journalists look too conspicuous; and that they made them targets for those opposed to their presence, as well as for people who wanted to steal the vests. Other reasons included that they are too heavy and too hot to wear. Most journalists said they made an assessment on the ground about the level of danger and whether they should put one on. One said:

> Wearing safety gear (flak etc.) or driving a hard car can either make one a target of bored people with guns looking for some fun or can also (as was the case with a couple of flak jackets we once had) make an attractive item for an ill-equipped combatant in a conflict zone to steal either at gunpoint or otherwise (B952 survey response 2004).

The same journalist said he did not like to wear his vest if the local fixer he was working with did not have one. “So, more often than not, I have left it off at times like those” (B952 survey response 2004). This sentiment was echoed by one of his colleagues who indicated that he would sacrifice his own safety if journalists he was with, including those working for other companies, did not have the same protective gear as he had.

> Sometimes you travel as a team and you may have three other guys that work for different networks and if some don’t have protective clothing and you do, then you feel that you don’t want to wear yours. In a way sometimes you feel a sense of belonging to the team (and) you find yourself compromising your safety (A735 survey response 2004).

An agency manager who was interviewed for this research said the company he worked for was aware of the reasons that journalists did not like to wear the vests and said that while they encouraged their staff to do so they were also investigating the possibility of providing more lightweight vests which journalists could wear under baggy shirts, for example. The implications of this issue for the policy as a whole will be discussed in the next chapter.

5. Refusals, excuses and lies

While this research has found that journalists do take advantage of the opportunity provided by this safety policy which allows them to refuse dangerous assignments, it also

found an unexpected result. Journalists also make other excuses and sometimes lie to their editors in order to avoid covering something they perceive to be dangerous.

Just under half of the journalist respondents interviewed for this study reported that they had refused a dangerous assignment, mainly in relation to covering stories in Iraq and none reported any negative repercussions as a result of this refusal. One respondent said while there was no negative reaction to his refusal, he admitted fearing that there might be long-term repercussions. "In the long run you will know how it turns out. The next time, they'll ask someone else first" (B462 survey response 2004).[34]

This finding is particularly significant in respect to that of Feinstein et al (2002) mentioned earlier. One respondent interviewed for this research said that while in 2003 he did not want to go to Iraq for a second time because of the danger, and although he was aware of his right to refuse, he had not exercised it. He did, however, refuse to go to Iraq in 2004 because of the deaths of journalists there and because he had become aware that other journalists, who worked for the same agency as he did, had refused and that they had not been sanctioned for it.

While most of the management respondents interviewed said they did not believe that journalists made excuses to avoid going on a dangerous assignment or to leave one early, just over half of the journalists interviewed said they or someone they knew had done so. Examples given of such excuses, according to the journalist respondents included illness, car trouble, family commitments and television equipment breaking down.

One journalist admitted that he and others "often have to lie to London" and said, by way of an example, that he had once told his editors he was *en route* to a story in a dangerous zone when he was not and that he had then lied again by saying his car had broken down. He gave another example where he had lied to his editors when he told them that the military had prevented him from continuing along a road to a story. These were some of the tactics he said he employed to "do whatever I need to do to remain safe" (B364 follow-up interview 2004).

[34] Another journalist said he assumed that negative consequences would eventually arise from journalists turning down dangerous assignments. He said: "Several people I know have refused to go to certain places. As far as I know this has not caused them any problems with superiors, but I think that if one repeatedly said no to assignments, managers would fairly soon stop asking them to go" (B178 survey response 2004).

6. Balancing safety and competition

Most of the journalist respondents interviewed (16 out of 20) said that they were able to balance their safety with the competitive nature of their work. The strategies they used to achieve this balance, however, were more their own custom-made tactics rather than any specific measures suggested by the 'Joint code of practice' and in most cases meant that competing with the opposition news agency became secondary to their safety.

Some journalists reported that on occasion they worked in concert with their competitors in the field. They did this because it sometimes made them feel safer than taking risks to scoop them. They also usually did not inform their editors at their head offices of such deals. One respondent told how he would train non-journalists, such as soldiers, to use a video camera and to film the conflict on his behalf, in order to avoid putting himself in danger.[35] Another simply said he had "given up" on competition:

> Before we used to try and chase to get the story first and feed – transmit by satellite (*insertion)* – first. Now I feel that even if I get the pictures into London (later than the opposition), I'll try and get a quality package in. I'll spend ten minutes longer. I've known a lot of people that have lost their lives trying to get the story first (A946 survey response 2004).

One journalist said that if one was to fully adhere to a safety policy such as the 'Joint code of practice", one should "just stay at home" (A749 follow-up interview 2004). The five journalist respondents who said they were unable to balance competitiveness and safety gave a variety of reasons including meeting deadlines which meant that safety measures were not always adhered to; that younger journalists "keep pushing the safety mark" (B364 survey response); and that beating the opposition became a priority over safety. One said that younger, less experienced journalists were:

> [B]eing encouraged by local senior producers who are then being patted on the backs from their head offices, for getting great pics. They go and recruit and give cameras, especially mini-DVs, (to) unskilled, unqualified individuals. They push

[35] He explained his strategy and how it helps him. "I can actually recruit people on the ground to go out and do the things that I wouldn't do. Uninsured, non-professionals, unskilled, untrained who can go out there and get those images. That's one of my tactics to survive. If I have to go into a minefield, my fixer goes first. He dies before I do, for $100 a day" (B364 follow-up interview 2004).

> the safety mark because now you've got people brought in from the outside who have to match those pics (B364 follow-up interview 2004).

This insight relates to the emergence of what might be termed a new breed of young people whom relatively low cost digital technology has empowered to work as television journalists on dangerous assignments. Such people are typically young, ambitious and eager to make their names in the profession and are therefore, according to some of the respondents of this study, often willing to take more risks. This phenomenon is discussed further in the next chapter.

Another journalist linked the competitiveness between the agencies to an adrenalin rush and said "sometimes we don't think straight when we are on adrenalin" (B669 survey response 2004). Another journalist also referred to the impact of adrenalin and described it in relation to the desire by both management and journalists to beat the competition.

> Management back at the HQ wants to win because it's big dollars business… On the other hand adrenalin when out in the field can 'blur' your views about the dangers and you are kind of sucked into competitiveness that you don't always perceive as negative. Often you want to win too… You want to do your job and cover the story to the best of your abilities (D965 follow-up interview 2004).

Another theme which arose from this research is that some journalists believe that pressure from the agency head offices for them to keep up with or beat the other agency had the effect of compromising their safety. While it is accepted by some journalists that there has been some decrease in such pressure in recent years, they also noted that there were people in their head offices who pressurised those in the field because they themselves were being pressured, whether by superiors, peers or themselves "to make sure that the people in the field push a little harder" (B952 follow-up interview 2004).[36]

This study has further found that the institutional demand for an agency to produce as much good and dramatic footage in a conflict zone as possible, in time to meet their client's needs and usually to beat their opposition, therefore, has the effect of

[36] "This is made worse when these people have had little or no field experience. Even if you are beating the opposition it is unlikely you will hear anyone tell you to take it easy for a day or two as soon enough they'll be asking you to catch up" (B952 follow-up interview 2004).

being translated into pressure by journalists in the field.[37] In this regard, for example, one respondent observed that:

> I think you cannot stop journalists doing risky or dangerous things. It is part of the job. I think editors should have meetings assessing the dangers staff are exposed to and intake editors, producers should be trained to deal with staff on the ground and should never put them under pressure to get a story (D415 follow-up interview 2004).

This perception of pressure for example, in the form of telephone calls from head offices reminding their journalists about what the competition is doing, was also raised at the Freedom Forum seminar by Roy Gutman of Newsweek Magazine and the War Crimes Project. He maintained that such calls were unnecessary.[38]

One journalist interviewed for this study suggested that the head offices should either use people on news-desks who had extensive experience of covering conflict or they should send field journalists to London for three to six months to participate in meetings and to work on the news-desk.

> They should be seeing things from the point of view of the journalists. They should have the journalists sit in on their meetings from time to time … deciding with the desk what is doable and what is not doable. It also empowers people. There is not enough of a circle, it needs to be a circle (and) people need to rotate in and out of that circle (B364 follow-up interview 2004).

Another journalist suggested that the companies' human resources departments could set up a process whereby journalists could complain "about pressure and or safety equipment". (D965 follow-up interview 2004).

The issue of competitiveness in conflict zones was raised by various journalist respondents and one of them said:

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[37] Another said: "There is pressure to get pictures first … Some editors get frustrated when coverage is delayed or doesn't happen, but sometimes people sitting at the other end of a phone line in an office are unaware of the conditions their colleagues are working in. You have to keep a view of what is achievable on the ground" (B178 survey response).

[38] Gutman told the seminar: "The reason we don't need those calls in the field is that we can generate our own competitive pressures and we do already with each other, we damn well know what our colleagues are doing. If you have your frontline people, your best people out there they know pretty well what is going on with their colleagues" (Freedom Forum 2000:9).

> I want AP and Reuters to jointly instruct their people on the ground to suspend their activities and not to leave it to us to make those decisions. News organisations themselves need to step in and set those limits. As long as there is competition in London it will automatically translate into competition on the ground… the company needs to encourage safety (but) at the moment competitiveness overrides safety (B364 follow-up interview 2004).

Various journalists linked this perceived pressure to the calibre and experience of staff employed to work on news-desks in the agencies' head offices, and who liaise with them in the field. Whether the communication they have with these people has a positive or negative impact on their safety depended on the maturity and level of experience of the person on the news-desk and their understanding of the situation in the field, they said. Some of the respondents said that they were concerned in this regard, about what they perceived as younger and less experienced staff being hired to work in such positions.[39]

The issue of this pressure was also raised by journalists who said it would be included in their suggestions if they were asked to participate in reviewing the policy.

7. Helping or hindering

Almost half of the number of journalists interviewed said they believed that complying with the safety policy would help them in their jobs with about an eighth saying it would hinder them and the remainder saying that it would neither help nor hinder them.

A journalist who reported that adhering to the policy does help him in his work, said that journalists who travelled on dangerous assignments now had "a little more to say" to producers and editors in London when they wanted them to cover something dangerous in order to catch up with the competition. "We have a little more power … now", he said (B462 survey response 2004).

The reasons given by those who felt that complying with the policy would be a hindrance included the perception that one could miss a story in the time it takes to liaise

[39] One journalist said: "You are dealing with junior people on the desk who don't even know geographically where you are … If you are talking to someone who has experience or who has some sort of knowledge of what you are going through, whose expectations are realistic, they're not going to ask you to do silly things or to perform unnecessary tasks. They are not going to put you under pressure which you don't need in the field anyway. And also when you are talking to somebody who is a lot more experienced on the desk, they have a lot more respect for the staff" (E266 follow up interview 2004).

with editors in the head office about safety issues (A 912 survey response). One journalist said that the policy was not flexible enough to take into account the point of view of the journalist on the ground but that the companies should "take that into consideration and trust the opinions of their field workers" (A735 survey response 2004).

Another journalist suggested that the aspect of the policy which stipulated that all journalists would be supplied with protective gear was "more to protect them (the agencies) against court cases or criticism" (D415 survey response 2004). A significant portion of the reasons given for the belief that the policy was neither a help nor a hindrance focused on the perceived disadvantages of wearing or carrying bullet-proof vests which will be discussed later in this chapter.

8. Participation in formulation and implementation

Less than an eighth of the journalist respondents reported having been involved in either the drawing up of or the implementation of the 'Joint code of practice' and just under a quarter of them said that they knew of a journalist who had been consulted about it. One of the journalists who was consulted said he was approached for his views by an agency manager about four months after the formulation of the 'Joint code of practice' and weeks after the death of another agency journalist in 2001. He added, however, that he had never seen the result of these consultations and would have liked to have been specifically consulted on the 'Joint code of practice'.

While an agency manager respondent said that he had approached "a number of senior people" who were asked "to garner the views of all the people in their region" (F767 follow-up interview 2004), the journalists interviewed for this study were not aware of having been involved in such a process.

It is significant to note here that while only four of the journalist respondents did not wish to have been consulted, 15 respondents expressed a desire for such consultation.[40] Their suggestions about the form this consultation could take included a

[40] Two of the respondents who said they did not wish to be consulted, one said he was probably "not available" for consultation and another said he was "not experienced enough" to be consulted at the time the policy was made.

survey amongst staff, workshops, regular meetings with journalists and managers and sending ideas to management by email.[41]

One journalist said he believed that the 'Joint code of practice' was intended to benefit only agency journalists who were based in Europe and America and while he would have wanted to have been consulted, he did not expect to be because he lives in what he called "the Third World" (E382 survey response 2004). Another journalist said he had accepted that he would not be consulted about such issues and said:

> On the ground I do what I want to do. I'm comfortable enough with myself to do whatever I need to do to remain safe. I do it my way. I take my own safety measures in my own hands and a lot of the time we are able to unite in the field, despite the interests of our organisations (B364 survey response 2004).

Responses from journalists who said they were not consulted in the formulation of the policy included that they felt disillusioned, that it was "an insult"; that they felt "ignored" and "treated like cattle" (B669, B952, A259, D965 follow-up interviews 2004). Some said they had given up hoping to be consulted; and that although they were not very experienced at the time the policy was formulated, they felt that they could have offered constructive opinions on safety. One said: "At least we could have been asked for our ideas" (A989 survey response 2004), while another said that agency managers "could have conducted a survey and requested contributions from all people who are working in the field in risk areas" (A735 survey response 2004). One journalist said if he had been consulted he would have had "a much higher level of respect for management" (B669 follow-up interview 2004).[42]

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[41] Most of the journalists interviewed, including freelancers, offered suggestions about how this safety policy could be reviewed and amended. One said: "I think that they need to get a lot of the staff, who are experienced together and have a sort of workshop in different regions so that each bureau can then input and say: 'OK regionally this is what we go through here, this is the flavour of our dangers'. So I think regionally, every area needs to do its own thing. And to have the feeling that they have an input right from the lowest level. To spend maybe once every two weeks with the staff, the regional editor needs to spend time with these guys, get to know their fears, the problems on the ground, what they need, what sort of back-up they need" (E266 follow-up interview 2004).

[42] Describing the potential impact of including ordinary journalists in discussions with managers about the policy, one respondent said: "You tend to do things differently if you know you (have been) part of setting the agreements. You feel much more bound by that agreement, you take ownership of it, but if it's something that was decided and imposed on you, you think it is what the company tells you to do (A735 follow-up interview 2004).

Another journalist said he believed that the policy is "something that exists out there and something that they (agencies) deliberately don't want you to have" (E266 follow-up interview 2004). One respondent said a 'broad-based' survey should have been conducted before the formulation of the policy and should have been directed at journalists who worked in conflict areas, while others suggested questionnaires or surveys. Some speculated on the potential effect of inviting journalists' participation.[43]

9. Reviewing the policy

All the journalists were asked what suggestions, if any, they would offer if asked to review the 'Joint code of practice'. The 15 who said they would liked to have been consulted about this safety policy said that this consultation could have been done during briefing sessions, by emailed questionnaire, during regular meetings, workshops or regional discussions.

In regard to decreasing the pressure from head office, they said that they would suggest that when they are working in a dangerous area, they should decide on their own whether it was safe enough to film something in order to beat or match the opposition agency. They said that people who work on the desks at the agencies' head offices in London should accept their assessment and not say things like: 'We understand the opposition is also in there' (A259 follow-up interview 2004).[44]

One of the journalist respondents interviewed suggested that what was needed on the news-desk were "mentors and qualified people who deal with you … on a daily basis… occasionally I do need to talk to people who know what's going on" (B364 follow-up interview 2004).

Another journalist suggested that the television news agencies should set up forums where journalists who travel to conflict areas could meet to discuss the policy,

[43] "I think it would impact in a very positive way because they'd feel much more part of the team – 'at least they consider my views on such and such a thing'. And it would impact on their self-esteem … that you don't just sit there in the meetings and not say anything, that people need to make an input of some sort, even if it sounds silly, you know?" (E266 follow-up interview).

[44] "Even saying (the other agency has the pictures) puts pressure on the journalist. Maybe (they) did get it, maybe they were lucky, maybe the situation has changed. Competition should be forgotten about in dangerous situations. I think there should be agreements between agencies or broadcasters, not only on the ground, but also in central offices. Even pools should be set up in particularly dangerous situations and resources combined to ensure safety" (D415 follow-up interview).

two or three times a year, with desk staff and human resources people at the head offices as well as representatives from broadcast companies. A journalist said he felt the London-based News Security Group comprising managers, and which drew up the 'Joint code of practice', was not inclusive enough. He suggested that meetings could be held at the head offices in London with all stakeholders every "three or four months … to see how things have changed in a year" (A735 follow-up interview 2004).

Some of the other ideas put forward by journalists about how the safety policy could be amended included ways to better incorporate freelancers into the implementation of the safety policy.

10. The policy's application to freelancers

All the management respondents said that they regarded camera operators and producers as freelancers, and two said they believed drivers, fixers and translators hired by journalists in conflict zones also fell into this category. One respondent did not answer this question. While most of the managers reported that some freelancers were sent for safety training, they did not specify which categories of freelancer this included. Significantly, while most of the managers said that in principle they only assigned to dangerous assignments those journalists who had undergone safety training, three of the four freelance journalists interviewed said they had not been offered such training.[45] They said that despite the fact that they had not had safety training, they were still being sent on dangerous assignments by either television news agency.

A management respondent said it was "standard operating procedure practice" to only send people on dangerous assignments if they have had safety training and added that it would be "the exception" to find regular freelancers who have not had such training" (F767 follow-up interview 2004).

Some respondents identified potential difficulties in providing safety training for people who were hired on an *ad hoc* basis when agency staff travelled to a conflict zone,

[45] One said: "If they are prepared to fork out money for insurance when we go on these dangerous assignments, why can't they just go the extra mile and at least make sure whoever goes out, whether you are a freelancer or not, has been on the Hostile Environments course. Because the impression you get is the life of a freelancer is not worth as much as somebody who is a permanent staffer" (E266 follow-up interview 2004).

such as getting people out of the country in which they live for training and the fact that journalists often hired different freelancers.

> In an ideal world, all freelancers involved in the same dangerous situation (in which) you are, should get the same safety training and insurance cover. In reality, I don't see it as possible as we are not working with the same people all the time (A749 follow up interview 2004).

Some managers reported that they provided safety training and insurance to all those specifically hired for a particular story. The focus of many of the managers and respondents was on the situation in Iraq, with few giving examples of how the policy applies to other regions. This, as will be pointed out in the next chapter, can have the effect of potentially not placing enough emphasis on safety in general. One manager said that freelance staff in places like Iraq, where the agencies had ongoing operations, were vetted and briefed by security consultants. Another reported difficulties in getting specifically Iraqi freelancers out of the country for safety training but reported that some had been trained by Centurion staff within Iraq.[46] Most of the journalist respondents said they believed that freelance producers, camera operators, drivers, translators and fixers should be afforded both safety training and insurance cover.[47] The main reasons given were that all those who were part of the team on a story should have the same benefits and that journalists very often relied for their safety on drivers, translators and fixers.[48]

Most of the freelance journalists interviewed said that they did receive bullet-proof vests on dangerous assignments, although they only wore them 'sometimes'. One freelance camera operator related how he had travelled to a conflict zone with a bullet-

[46] An agency manager described security provisions for full-time and freelance journalists working in Afghanistan and Iraq: "By attaching trained security advisers to teams on location, most big news companies, I would argue, took the code to heart and strived to enhance the safety environment in which their folks were operating whilst potentially in harm's way. Decisions about what to cover and how to cover it were made with expert safety advice on tap – initially problems occurred with safety advisors saying everything was 'off limits', but, as both sides got to understand each other's needs, this proved a very good way of assessing what the news gathering requirements were and what, if any risks were attached" (F767 follow-up interview 2004)

[47] One freelance journalist said: "I would love to feel more confident about insurance as this is something that is never made very clear at the start of a shoot" (E863 survey response 2004).

[48] A journalist motivated his position by saying: "Everyone should have access to training and insurance. It's unreasonable to expect a person to work in a dangerous environment without both. I wouldn't do it so I wouldn't want to be in a position where I'd be asking others to go" (B178 survey response 2004).

proof vest which had to be sent back as airport officials suspected that since he had such protective clothing he was probably a mercenary (E873 survey response 2004).

Half of the number of freelance journalists interviewed said they always received helmets, gas masks and first aid kits for such assignments, while the other half reported never being supplied with first aid kits.

While most of the managers said their staff was given extra safety equipment to take for any freelancers they may hire in a conflict zone, most of the journalists interviewed said that they did not.[49]

Most of the journalists interviewed expressed the view that they wanted measures to be put in place to protect the freelancers they hired in the same way that they are protected. One said he felt uncomfortable wearing protective gear if the freelancers he was working with did not have it too. Some journalists said that local freelancers they had hired had been killed on a story and that they were frustrated that their families were either not compensated by the agency concerned or were not given the same amount of compensation that a staff journalist would have been given.[50]

11. Differences between agencies

a. Journalists

Where there are differences in the findings between APTN and Reuters TV journalists, they mainly relate to four issues: the manner in which the journalists were informed of the 'Joint code of practice'; their experience of the implementation of some of the elements of the policy; the way in which they comply with it; and their perceptions about its usefulness.

None of the Reuters journalists and only two of the APTN journalists said they had been consulted in drawing up the 'Joint code of practice'. While half the number of journalist respondents from each agency said they had seen the 'Joint code of practice',

[49] One journalist said he would welcome being given extra equipment for freelancers. "There is no telling when or where trouble may arise, or who you would use as a driver, fixer, etc. in any given circumstance. Having extra flaks in each bureau for the crew to take to a story and give the local hire to use would, however, be easy to make happen" (B952 follow-up interview).

[50] "During one unfortunate assignment my driver was killed. The company paid very little money to compensate his family (a wife and three or four children). Although the amount may have been decent in 'local' terms, I felt it was an insult" (B952 survey response).

all of those from Reuters TV said it had either been distributed by management or they had seen it on the company's internal website. None of the APTN journalists, however, reported having been shown it by the agency. Most had seen it published in a non-company publication. Some could not remember the name of the publication, while others said they had seen it in a magazine called RealScreen in 2001. As was noted in Chapter 3, it cannot be assumed that because a policy document is emailed or printed in a company magazine, it is read by all of those for whom it is intended (Colebatch 2002, Leonard 2004).

All of the Reuters TV journalists and most of the APTN journalists said they complied with the safety guidelines. Most of the Reuters TV journalists and just over half of the APTN journalists said they believed that safety training had improved their safety in the field. While a minority of APTN journalists reported always having a first aid kit to take on a dangerous assignment, half of the Reuters TV journalists said they did. Only one of the journalist respondents reported having been on a refresher course in safety and that person was a Reuters TV employee.

Most Reuters TV journalists said that they thought that complying with safety guidelines would help them while a minority of APTN journalist respondents shared this belief. Most Reuters TV journalists and just over half of APTN journalists said they had refused a dangerous assignment. About half of the number of journalists interviewed from both companies said they knew of other journalists who had refused dangerous assignments. Half the journalists interviewed from each agency said that they, or a journalist they knew of, had made excuses to avoid dangerous assignments.

There were no significant differences in the findings from journalists who freelanced exclusively for either Reuters TV or APTN. None of them had seen the 'Joint code of practice document' and while they were aware of some of its elements, none were aware that the agencies offered and encouraged counselling or that freelancers should have retraining in safety. Only one freelancer (for APTN) was aware that freelancers should be supervised by an experienced colleague on a dangerous assignment.

None of the freelancers interviewed said they had been consulted about the safety policy, although most of them would have liked to have been. Only one of the freelancers interviewed, an APTN freelancer, said he had been on a safety training course. Another

freelancer (for APTN) said he never wore a flak jacket on dangerous assignments and said the agency had never provided him with one, nor had it given him any other protective equipment.

The journalist who works on a freelance basis for Reuters TV and two of those who work for APTN said they had either themselves, or knew someone who had, made an excuse to avoid a dangerous assignment.

Inasmuch as the findings may indicate patterns with regard to the way in which the two agencies implement this policy (notwithstanding the small sample size of the respondents) will be discussed in Chapter 6.

b. Managers

All the managers interviewed said that journalists were consulted specifically about the 'Joint code of practice' document either before or after its formulation. They also all reported that the agency for which they worked do evaluate the 'Joint code of practice' although none gave details about how the review processes worked and how often they took place.

One manager, from Reuters TV, said that staff could be disciplined or even fired if they did not adhere to the safety guidelines. None of the Reuters TV managers who participated in this research and half of the APTN managers interviewed said they believed that their staff made excuses to avoid going on a dangerous assignment. All the APTN managers and half the Reuters TV management respondents said their journalist staff was given extra safety equipment to take on dangerous assignments for freelancers to use. While all the APTN managers and half the Reuters TV managers said freelancers (including journalists, drivers, translators and fixers) were sent on safety training, they clarified this (in their answers to follow-up questions), by saying that drivers, translators and fixers were only sometimes sent on such courses.

An analysis of differences in the findings from managers from the two news agencies is discussed in the following chapter.

12. Conclusion

These findings have shown that the television news agency journalists interviewed for this study are not generally aware of the existence of the 'Joint code of practice' as such and where they are, it was not necessarily brought to their attention by the companies for whom they work. Most journalists are, however, aware of most of the elements contained in the policy which they had heard about from a variety of sources and comply with them to an extent.

Most of the journalists were not consulted in the formulation or implementation of this safety policy, although most would like to have been. Most have had safety training, but most have not had retraining in safety issues. Those who have had the training generally believe that it has improved their safety in the field, but only half of the number of journalists interviewed think that complying with the 'Joint code of practice' would help them in their work.

Journalists do refuse assignments they believe to be too dangerous but they also make other excuses and sometimes lie to their editors to keep from doing something dangerous. Most of the journalists who participated in this study believe that they are able to balance issues of safety with competition although they do so by personally making efforts to minimise competition with journalists from the other agency while in the field. The next chapter will analyse these findings.

Chapter Six

Analysis of findings

1. Introduction

This chapter analyses the findings of this research in terms of a range of insights offered by policy theory. It also discusses the triangulation of the data gathered from the survey questionnaires, the interviews with journalists and managers on their perceptions about the formulation, implementation and review of the safety policy as well as the analysis of the policy document.

This study's emphasis on the value of the participatory approach to policy theory directs this assessment to examine the role played by both journalists and managers in all stages of this safety policy. It does so, however, not at the exclusion of valuable insights from the other approaches to policy theory.

2. Initiation and formulation of the policy

The initiative for the formulation of a safety policy for television journalists who cover conflict came from the death of APTN cameraman Miguel Gil Moreno de Mora. As discussed in Chapter 3 the pressure, from a participatory perspective, which was brought to bear by his family after his death as well as an existing predisposition, since Moreno de Mora was the second agency cameraman to be killed in just over a year, contributed to the ultimate formulation and adoption of the 'Joint code of practice'.

This policy can best be analysed in terms of the chaos and power approaches to policy. In this regard, while television news agency managers reported that they had consulted journalists in the formulation of this policy, at least as far as this research goes, this appears not to have been a broad process. On the contrary, this study demonstrates that although the participatory paradigm suggests that all stakeholders be involved in the formulation of policy, a minority of the journalist respondents said they had been consulted by managers before the policy was drawn up or during its implementation. The journalists surveyed and interviewed for this study, however, expressed a desire for such

involvement and suggested, as participatory theory does, that it would help to empower them.

The formulation of this policy can also, to a lesser extent, be described in terms of the functionalist approach of policy-making which sees it as an instrument for harmonising the functioning of the institution as a whole. The managers interviewed for this study seem to think that it does operate in the general interests of the television news industry and indeed for each company and its journalists, notwithstanding competition and the differing interests between them. In addition, the making of this policy did follow a functionalist path of proceeding logically from formulation to implementation and some review. The details of the review processes used by the two agencies were, however, not clarified by the managers who participated in this study.

The review process and journalists' potential involvement in it will be discussed further in this chapter.

3. Implementation

3.1 Communication and awareness

That half of the journalists who participated in this study were not aware of the policy can be linked to the possibility that the television news agency managers failed to communicate it effectively and omitted to seek legitimacy for it amongst journalists broadly, rather than that they neglected to implement the policy as a whole (see Colebatch 2002). These omissions come from power and liberal pluralist positions, and show that if the policy had been properly communicated to journalists, as the participatory approach calls for, it would have been more effective.

As will be discussed in the next section, there are elements of the policy that the agencies implement and those which they do not.

3.2 Partial implementation

The power and chaos approaches to the implementation of policy can be applied to the findings which show that while both Reuters TV and APTN have sent journalists on safety training courses, they have not generally adhered to the clause which stipulates that they also be sent on refresher training courses. As previously mentioned in this study, the

policy explicitly says that such retraining should be made mandatory. In addition the policy does not specify what it means by 'retraining', for example whether it is assumed that journalists might forget what they have learned, or whether it is to take into account new conditions of danger in the field.

This raises points highlighted by the power paradigm that the lack of attention in the process of formulating this policy given to the issues of power and responsibility, manifests itself in implementation, or rather, the lack of implementation of parts of this policy. It has thus created a *de facto* form of chaos.

Both television news agencies appear to be implementing the element of the policy which allows journalists to refuse dangerous assignments. The gap in relation to communicating and implementing this clause, however, has given rise to concern on the part of some journalists that refusing dangerous assignments may have a long-term impact on their careers. This also contributes to some journalists employing strategies such as making other excuses and sometimes lying to avoid covering something they believe to be too dangerous which shows that the policy is not working entirely as it was presumably expected to. It is significant to note here that while Feinstein et al (2002) found that journalists would not be likely to refuse a dangerous assignment for fear of negative affects on their careers, this study shows that this trend appears to have changed as a result of the dangers in covering the Iraq war and its aftermath.[51]

This is a matter about a disjuncture between policy and implementation, the latter being affected by power relations on the ground which – one can deduce – were not sufficiently appreciated and catered for in the policy and its liberal pluralist elite formulation. However, the mere fact of the policy providing this as a right has had an empowering consequence for some journalists. Thus, some respondents, who admitted that they had been reluctant to turn down dangerous assignments a year before this study was carried out, said that they, or journalists they know of, had declined to either cover news in Iraq, or to return on assignment to that country for a second or a third time. The deaths of journalists in Iraq were cited as the main reason they felt unsafe in covering that

[51] The study by Feinstein et al. in 2001 into the psychopathology of journalists who covered wars found *inter alia* that "while war journalists are never openly forced into covering a particular conflict by their news bosses, it is generally recognized that a pattern of refusing dangerous assignments may have adverse career consequences" (2002:3).

story. They added that they were more comfortable refusing such assignments because they had seen other colleagues doing the same with no immediate negative career consequences.

An area where the policy is particularly applied in a haphazard manner, as highlighted by the chaos approach to policy theory, is in the provision of safety equipment. Not all journalists reported receiving the same safety equipment as their colleagues and only half said they always had first aid kits to take on dangerous assignments.

Despite the finding which indicated that some of the journalist respondents were suspicious of the motivations of their managers in formulating the policy, with suggestions including that it was adopted to please their insurance companies, it does draw attention to an area of shared interest in this policy. The pluralist approach directs attention to different interests at play in policy and the provision of insurance benefits for journalists is such an example. In the case of the safety policy, journalists welcome the fact that should they die their next-of-kin would receive financial assistance and if they are injured they would be paid an amount of money. From the companies' position, on the other hand, having an insurance company pay out in these instances is far more preferable than the television news agency being obliged to cover these costs from their own budgets. There are, however, also differences in interests in the implementation of this policy, for example, editors in the head offices wanting stories while journalists in the field have other priorities to navigate, such as their survival.

The findings from freelancers included in this study revealed similar concerns to their full-time counterparts. They also demonstrate elements of chaos in how the policy is implemented in regards to freelancers and will be analysed in the next section.

4. Freelancers

The 'Joint code of practice' safety policy expressly includes freelancers in its provisions and while only freelance camera operators and producers were interviewed for this study, it did investigate journalists' and managers' perceptions about the issue of applying the safety policy to other freelancers such as drivers, fixers, translators and journalists who are hired on an *ad hoc* basis.

The freelancers interviewed had mostly not undergone any safety training and complained about not receiving adequate safety equipment. One expressed particular concern about insurance issues and wanted them to be clarified to him (E863 follow-up interview). This confusion about how the insurance aspect of this policy is administered *vis-a-vis* freelancers, whether they are regularly hired by the television news agencies or employed on an *ad hoc* basis, can be analysed from a power perspective of policy which would recognise the power of the agency managers to decide who is insured and by how much.

Like the full-time journalists interviewed for this study, the freelancers said they wanted to be involved in the implementation and review of the policy and offered suggestions about changes they would like to see. This further supports the argument of this study that the participation of journalists in the processes of this policy would be valuable and would help to make the policy more effective.

All the journalists interviewed furthermore supported the idea that freelancers, including drivers, fixers and translators be afforded the same privileges as full-time journalists. In this regard, the journalists appear to subscribe to a functionalist perspective, where every part of the whole should be accommodated in a policy.

The lack of agreement among managers about who counts as a freelancer in terms of this policy also indicates that the functionalist consensus for effective policy is absent.

That some journalists are reluctant to use their safety equipment in solidarity with those journalists who do not have it, including freelancers, is a significant finding which impacts on the effectiveness of this aspect of the safety policy. Without having consulted journalists broadly, news managers are unlikely to be aware of these trends. The power and the chaos approaches to policy theory would best apply to the unequal provision of safety equipment and training to freelancers and full-time journalists.

5. Review of the policy

The old adage which maintains that “if something ain’t broke, don’t fix it” can often explain the conservativism that can perpetuate a *status quo* with regard to policy. However, where it is clear that the policy is not working, at least in part, this tension may precipitate review. In the case of the ‘Joint code of practice’, however, there may not be

sufficient awareness that it is not as effective as it could be, because journalists who use the policy are not being generally consulted about their opinions.

While the agency managers who participated in this study said the policy was being reviewed, they did not give a clear description of such processes. For example two managers working for the same agency gave different answers about who was responsible for reviewing the safety policy. This supports the analysis in this study of the policy document which demonstrates a lack of definition as well as a lack of internal communication which is, in turn, a function of a lack of an implementing and review strategy that should have supplemented the policy statement at the time it was formulated and adopted.

The value of the participatory approach to policy theory is further emphasised by the results of this study which found that while journalists would like to have been involved in formulating the policy, they also want to become involved in reviewing it. In this regard, the findings show that if television news agency managers were to involve journalists in their review process, they would become aware of a range of issues around which they could amend the policy to make it more effective, in the opinion of the journalists.

When the journalist respondents were asked whether they had any suggestions about how the policy could be improved upon, most of them provided constructive and detailed ideas. This is also significant in terms of the finding which shows that while the managers maintain that the policy is reviewed, the fact that the policy itself does not specify a review process keeps it firmly in static managerial hands and therefore does not provide the scope for journalists to become involved, at least not on a formal and regular basis. This, in turn, prevents journalists from being officially included in the processes of assessing and improving this policy.

As previously mentioned, without journalists formally adding their voices to an evaluation of the safety policy, the managers would not be able to review it properly. The lack of information about how the policy is monitored, evaluated and whether recommendations are made, or not about how to effect necessary changes, suggests that no proper policy review process has been applied to the ‘Joint code of practice’.

As mentioned in the previous chapter it appears as if managers had selected journalists with whom they would consult. Although they did not provide details of which journalists were consulted or how they were chosen to take part in this process, one manager indicated that it was on the basis of seniority (F767 follow-up interview 2004). While this process involved a measure of participation, it can be diagnosed as being a power approach to policy.

6. Practicality of the policy

When analysing the perceptions of journalists about the effectiveness of the policy, it is necessary to highlight how they see it as being beneficial to them. Most journalists interviewed believed the safety training, as provided for by this policy, does make them safer in the field because they are taught a range of strategies of how to handle themselves in dangerous situations and how to do first aid should someone be injured. They were not so certain, on the other hand, if the 'Joint code of practice' safety policy as a whole actually helps them in their work in reality. In this regard the respondents identified areas such unequal access to safety equipment, not wearing bullet-proof vests and perceived pressure, which are elaborated on below.

As previously mentioned, the journalists who participated in this study have demonstrated that if they were to participate in the review process they would be in a position to highlight the obstacles which they believe block the effective implementation of this safety policy. Without their participation in the process, their managers would not have access to their insights about areas of implementation the journalists found to be problematic. That there are different perceptions should, therefore, not come as a surprise, because the formulation model was liberal pluralist and elitist, and the journalists were left out.

An area on which some of the journalist respondents focused is the impact on the effectiveness of the safety policy by younger, less experienced journalists who were less inclined to adhere to it. This can be analysed both in the light of the power and participatory paradigms of policy. On the one hand, television news agency managers use their positions of power to hire some of these people but, on the other hand, the participatory perspective on policy would recognise that advances in digital technology

have empowered these individuals to enter the profession as freelancers.[52] It can also be explained in terms of the political economy of television news organisations which would make it unlikely that experienced and higher paid people would be taken out of the field to work on desks in the place of cheaper staff. Such an issue can, however, only be effectively raised and discussed if journalists were to formally participate in a review procedure.

In addition, while the journalists interviewed for this study were relatively experienced, as mentioned in Chapter 4, and tended to refuse dangerous assignments, they said they believed that the willingness of less experienced journalists to take more risks added to the pressure on them to disregard safety guidelines.

Journalists perceive that they are pressurised by head office staff because of the competitive relationship between the two news agencies. While some journalists interviewed said this pressure had decreased in recent years, they did report that it still exists and is still fuelled by competition. The pressure to beat the opposition agency or to keep up with it, as reported by most of the journalists interviewed, feeds into the power approach to policy. It should, however, be recognised that in accordance with a participatory approach and in order to further protect their safety on the ground, journalists do in fact liaise with their competition about what they should cover, or they chose to decide not to compete with the journalists from the other agency. This demonstrates that the power of journalists' superiors in the news agencies is neither unmitigated nor absolute.

7. Conclusion

While, as noted in Chapter 5, there are some differences in the way in which the two international television news agencies approached the formulation and implementation of the 'Joint code of practice', the evidence from this study casts doubt on whether both companies have widely consulted journalists about this policy, or whether they provide all journalists (i.e. including freelancers) with the same access to safety equipment, training and retraining.

[52] Recent advances in digital technology have resulted in the availability of cheaper, smaller and easier to use video cameras and the ability to edit footage on a laptop computer and to transmit it with an ordinary cellular telephone (Venter 2003).

The lack of confidence expressed by journalists in the provisions of the policy and their implementation results in them designing their own strategies to improve their safety. These include making excuses and lying to avoid covering dangerous assignments and deciding not to compete with the opposition agency.

It is argued here that the act of drawing journalists and freelancers into a broad-based consultation process about reviewing safety policy and its implementation will increase managers' awareness of the issues journalists perceive as stumbling blocks to the effective implementation of this policy. These include access to safety equipment, safety training and retraining, and what journalists regard as unwarranted competitive pressure from their editors and other news-desk staff at company headquarters. It could also lead to reformulation and improvement, and thence to improvements in implementation of the safety policy.

The next chapter, and concluding chapter in this study, makes various recommendations following from this analysis.

Chapter Seven

Conclusion

1. Introduction

This study was conducted at a time when journalists face increasing threats in their coverage of dangerous assignments and in a year in which more "news media staff" were killed than in the last ten years (INSI 2005).[53] The ubiquitous dangers threatening journalists were part of the reason for the formulation of the 'Joint code of practice for journalists working in conflict zones' in 2000 and upon which this study is focused. It has investigated the perceptions by journalists and managers at the world's two international television news agencies, APTN and Reuters TV, about the origins and implementation of the safety policy of which both companies are signatories.

This policy was studied using a framework of five paradigms of policy theory, namely functionalism, pluralism, participatory, power and chaos (Berger 2003) to understand the processes of policy origin, formulation, implementation and review (including in this last stage, monitoring and evaluation). The political economy of television news organisations was also discussed in an attempt to assess this policy in the context of the production patterns of international television news organisations. They fiercely compete for broadcast clients and operate, like any other big business, according to strict hierarchies in which ordinary journalists produce the commodity their managers sell.

The intention of this study was to evaluate the safety policy both in its own terms (see Chapter 3) and especially through analysing the perceptions of stakeholders, including managers and especially journalists (camera operators and producers) who work or worked either full-time or on a freelance basis for either of the two agencies and who covered dangerous assignments on their behalf (see Chapter 5).

The purpose of this approach was to find out how the journalists, for whom the policy was ostensibly made, perceive it to work for them, or not. This approach was

[53] The International Federation of Journalists' figures which were also released at the beginning of 2005, said, however, that more journalists had been killed in 2004 than in any year on record. It was decided to use the INSI figures as they were the same as, if not similar, to those released by a range of other media organisations (IFJ 2005).

based on the argument which holds that the more actors who participate in the formulation, implementation and review of a policy, the more likely it is that it will be richer and more broadly accepted and therefore more effective.

This conclusion provides an overview of policy theory and the findings reached in relation to this theory, as discussed in Chapter 2, about what makes for effective policy. Apart from analysing this policy in relation to these standards, it is also judged on the basis of how it fits with what its purpose is supposed to be, which in this regard, is drawn from the perceptions of the people who use it. In the light of these insights and in the spirit of contributing to helping this policy become a more effective and living document, this chapter then makes various recommendations.

2. Assessing the policy from the perspective of journalists

An analysis of this safety policy, in Chapter 3, showed that it is weakened in that it provides little detail on how it is to be implemented and no guidance on the manner in which it should be reviewed. This is echoed in the findings from journalists, both in their answers to the survey questionnaire and their follow-up interviews about their perceptions of the policy and their suggestions about how to improve it. Furthermore, some of the journalists said they believe that their views were not sought by managers since the initial consultation process was a narrow one which focussed only on certain journalists. For these reasons most of the journalists interviewed for this study maintained that given the opportunity to participate in a review the policy, they would be able to point to areas where it would benefit from change.

Their perceptions about key challenges such as safety training, the provision of safety equipment, pressure from their head offices and the impact of less experienced field journalists, the scope for refusing dangerous assignments, and the position of freelancers show that their insights about this policy are significantly different to those of their managers. The findings of this study therefore, demonstrate that the drafters of the 'Joint code of practice' should have, at the outset, consulted journalists more broadly about what they would like to see in such a policy. If they had more clearly identified mechanisms for its implementation and review – also including journalists' involvement

– then the policy would have enjoyed higher levels of legitimacy among those it is supposed to help and incorporate valuable insight from them.

3. Theory

This study leans towards the participatory paradigm, but it also promotes a synthesis of various aspects of functionalism, pluralism, participatory, power and chaos approaches in policy theory. These were used in this study on the basis that that different aspects of policy theory offer useful insights. The analysis of this research bears out this approach, with various areas being highlighted by the different paradigms.

To sum up these insights, functionalism regards policy as being harmonising and integrative; while pluralism's focus is on contesting interests and the shifting ways in which they are able to compromise. The power approach, on the other hand, looks at control and influence in the processes of making and implementing policy. The chaos paradigm sees these processes as fundamentally mixed up – a hodgepodge of ideas, ideals, contradictions and insights. The participatory approach, the significance of which this study stresses, looks at policy in terms of the point of view of all the participants, especially those with less power. This study confirms the weight of this approach as it demonstrates how policy can be examined by using aspects of these perspectives.

Policy can be both empowering, in terms of the participatory paradigm, and disempowering, according to a power approach which also sees it as potentially serving the interests of one party in the process. Furthermore, the participatory approach regards as a significant characteristic of effective policy, its ability to serve all stakeholders. Policy can also either be carefully thought through and planned (*a la* functionalism) or thrown together in an *ad hoc* manner as recognised by the chaos perspective of policy.

While functionalism and pluralism assume that the participants in the making, implementing and reviewing of policy are equal, this is not the case. Journalists are instructed by their superiors, who have more power than they do, about what tasks to perform (or stories to cover) in a process which leaves little room for dissent. This study has, therefore, recognised that in accepting the existence of competing interests and unequal power relations amongst stakeholders, policy principles should be explicit, and

procedures should be put in place to ensure that all become involved and feel that they can participate sufficiently.

This means that in order for policy to be able to acknowledge and compensate for these inequalities, it should be ensured that all stakeholders are able to participate in all its processes. In the instance of the 'Joint code of practice' safety policy, for it to work in the interests of mainly the journalists whom it purports to want to help protect, they must be consulted. In this regard it is suggested that there must be recognition of the different levels of power capabilities of all stakeholders in an attempt to ensure the full involvement of all.

Television news agencies are businesses whose commodity is news video footage which is expensive to produce and to distribute. With continual competition for clients from the broadcast world and the financial pressure of covering the ongoing Iraq war, news agencies' resources are stretched. The additional demands of policy implementation on an institution's resources, time and motivations should therefore, also be examined in this context (Jenkins 1978). In addition it is accepted that stakeholders who are not included in the policy processes can experience alienation, as some of the journalist respondents of this study have expressed (Lincoln and Guba 1985, in Parsons 1995). Thus there is even more reason for managements to be motivated to take steps to be seen to be involving journalists broadly in the making, implementation and review of this safety policy.

Even if a news agency has the resources, the time and the motivation to implement the safety policy, which some of the findings suggest may not be the case, this study has argued that one of the most central elements to the effectiveness of a policy is the involvement of the journalists themselves. This, it is believed, is at least one positive incentive for its effective implementation (Parsons 1995).

4. Evaluating the Findings

The findings of this study are evaluated in relation to both the theory insights, the analysis of the policy document and the processes of its origin and formulation and the findings from the survey questionnaires and the follow-up interviews. A degree of chaos

prevails because this policy was not made, nor is it being implemented, with the full knowledge of journalists.

Gaps or weaknesses in the policy as identified in Chapter 3 are largely echoed by the perceptions of journalists about the 'Joint code of practice'. For example, its lack of clarity about how the policy is to be communicated has been translated into a situation in which half of the sample of journalists who participated in this study say they had not seen a copy of the document. In addition, this oversight means that the journalists are not fully conversant with their rights, benefits or obligations and responsibilities under the policy which consequently allows managers not to implement it fully. An example of such patchy implementation, as previously mentioned is in the area of safety training and retraining. This lack of thorough communication of the policy has, in addition, created a situation in which not all journalists are aware of exactly how the policy is meant to benefit them, for example their lack of awareness about access to retraining in safety.

Furthermore, the policy's lack of detail about how it will be reviewed means that there is no coherent strategy by which flaws and problems identified in relation to it will be identified. In particular the fact that journalists in general, were not post its adoption, drawn into a broad review process has resulted in management being unaware of significant problems they experience in their daily use of the policy.

This study has found that the 'Joint code of practice' does not live up to the standards of effective policy as noted in previous chapters. In addition, the television news agency journalists interviewed have expressed their disappointment that the policy which is supposed to benefit them was, in the main, formulated and implemented without their involvement. While the intentions of managements to consult with a select group of individual journalists might have been well intended, the effect is that it has distanced other journalists from the very policy that was ostensibly made for them. As was also noted in Chapter 5, in approaching certain senior journalists on safety issues, an agency manager had assumed that they would collect the views of their colleagues in the regions in which they were based. This either did not happen at all, or not to the extent to which the manager had hoped, or it happened in such a way that the journalists approached were not aware of their role in this consultation process.

The journalist respondents who participated in this study want, as noted in Chapter 5, to be involved in its processes in order for them to fully accept it. Furthermore, if they contribute their coalface insights the 'Joint code of practice' would be an optimally-informed policy.

Insights from policy theory also prepared the researcher to find unintended effects of this safety policy which appeared in the form of journalists not always adhering to it, and in the case of some of the respondents, believing that it did not help them in their jobs or keep them safer. In addition, as has been mentioned in the findings, three-quarters of the journalists interviewed for this research said that they only sometimes wore bullet-proof vests on dangerous assignments. Furthermore, only one out of 20 journalists had been on a refresher safety training course, which the policy recommends should be made mandatory by all the news organisations committed to it.

This finding points to another area which could benefit from the participation of journalists in the implementation of the policy. While managers are likely to some extent, to be aware that the bulk and conspicuousness of these safety jackets militate against them being worn more often, consultations with journalists might help the companies provide a more effective alternative such as lighter vests that can be hidden under other clothing. Managers should, however, as proposed by the participatory approach, consult journalists before buying a different type of bullet-proof vest, to determine whether indeed they would be more likely to wear them.

It was also found that the journalists' lack of involvement in the formulation, implementation and review of the policy resulted in a perception that it was not made in their interests and that they did not have ownership of it. Most of the journalists interviewed, however, expressed a willingness to become involved and suggested concrete ways in which they could participate. Some went as far as offering insights into how such involvement could result in them having an increased sense of belonging to the agencies for which they worked.

It is essential that journalists are given the opportunity to formally and regularly offer their views on how they perceive the implementation of this safety policy if it is to be effective. Armed with this information offered by journalists, managers would then be

able to act quickly to rectify the situation and to help to amend and improve the safety policy where necessary.

The research also looked at the position of freelance camera operators and producers who worked on dangerous assignments for the television news agencies and showed that they feel as if they are not regarded by management as important as full-time staff. Significantly most of the full-time staff showed empathy for these freelancers as well as those occasionally employed by agencies, who are known in the industry as 'local hires' or 'support staff', and want them all to be afforded training, safety equipment and insurance cover. The policy does not provide for this. It remains to be seen whether these ambiguities are convenient to those in positions of power at television news agencies or whether they merely reflect an oversight on the part of the policy-makers which further contributes to the chaotic character of this policy.

While journalists' organisations internationally are increasingly calling for full-time and freelance journalists "and their assistants" to be given the same protections (Reporters Without Borders 2002), this does not seem to be happening.

The weaknesses of this policy reflect a lack of rigour in the agency managers' understanding of policy and what it takes to have an optimum policy and be able to practice it in terms of the purpose for which it was made.

The issue of freelance journalists (including drivers, fixers and translators) is an important part of the recommendations of this research and is discussed further in the next section.

5. Recommendations

The analysis in the previous chapter has demonstrated that in order to increase the effectiveness of the 'Joint code of practice' safety policy, mechanisms should be created whereby journalists could become involved in both its implementation and review. Examples of possible mechanisms have been suggested by some of the journalists themselves in Chapter 5.

It is suggested that in line with the spirit of these recommendations, further research in this area could examine strategies for monitoring this safety policy. In

addition, it could result in the formulation of methods to assess the 'Joint code of practice', even acknowledging and understanding the limits of positivism.

In designing such strategies it must be borne in mind that policy is a contested terrain (Colebatch 2002) and that journalists, managers and freelancers, and competing companies, as suggested by the pluralist approach, may not easily reach consensus. In addition it is recognised that, particularly where there are stakeholders with different levels of power, implementation can often be the site of a struggle for control. For these reasons it is suggested that a neutral party, acceptable to both journalists and managers should initially become involved in the process to help build channels of representation. This would assist in ensuring that all voices are heard in the review process and further implementation of this safety policy.

Unless steps are taken to involve journalists in reviewing this policy, the reality of the television news agencies operating in an increasingly dangerous environment may force changes to it. In this event it cannot be guaranteed that those changes will simply be a reaction to worsening safety conditions rather than the carefully considered amendments which could emerge from broad participation.

It must also be recognised that a shift to a stricter adherence of this policy could impact on the television companies' resources as it will involve them buying and updating safety equipment and distributing it more equally and widely, as well as sending more full-time and freelance journalists for safety training and retraining. When seen in this light it becomes apparent that implementing safety measures can impact on news companies' financial resources, and the temptation is therefore great to involve younger, less experienced and cheaper journalists who may be willing to take more risks than those who have been in the business longer. This clearly undermines the policy and perpetuates unnecessary risk-taking.

6. Conclusion

Measures to make journalists safer should adapt to changing conditions, which continually throw up new and more severe threats to journalists as they carry out their work covering dangerous assignments and these should, most importantly, be discussed with journalists themselves.

It is commendable that the television news industry drew from the initiative of a family in mourning for a slain journalist, and formulated and adopted the 'Joint code of practice for journalists working in conflict zones' in 2000. It is not enough, however, for news executives to formulate a policy, leaving aside even its internal omissions, to help keep journalists safer and start implementing it. What is needed is to invite the formal and broad participation of journalists in policy formulation and definition, and their feedback about how it is working and how it can be improved upon.

This study has shown that the implementation of this policy is by no means ideal. However, while it accepts that television agency journalists work in competitive conditions and in environments in which dangers cannot always be avoided, changes can be put in place to maximise the effectiveness of this policy. Arguably if journalists' inputs are taken seriously by their managers and acted upon, it will increase their acceptance of this policy as a whole.

Journalists do not want to be killed and their managers do not want them to die, and while both parties accept that news-gathering can be "a dangerous game", they both believe in principle that the safety policy's measures can potentially help make journalists safer in the field. They do not, however, agree that this is happening in practice. Journalists, full-time and freelance, want more. They are looking, in many cases, for consultative leadership from their managers and want to see evidence that this safety policy was, in fact created in their best interests rather than for insurers, or to salve consciences.

The implication for policy theory of the findings of this study is that it should include the recognition that policy is best analysed from a range of insights. It should routinely recognise the role that power plays in the various policy processes; that input can come, as pluralists suggest, from a range of sources; and that crucially, from a participatory point of view, it should acknowledge the value of involving a broad range of stakeholders in policy processes.

It therefore follows that apart from offering models with which to broadly analyse the stages of the policy process, functionalism provides little of value. It neither recognises the existence of unequal power relations nor the irrational and partisan processes of policy, as mentioned in previous chapters. Moreover, in accepting the

interpretivist approach (Colebatch 2002) which recognises that individuals make their own meaning from what they experience, policy must question the positivist notion, which sometimes accompanies a functionalist paradigm, that policy is a rational process whose impact can be precisely measured.

In examining whether a policy is working or not one should, however, acknowledge the complexity of the issue of measurement and accept that while some parts of the policy might be measured, it is more difficult to apply the positivist notion to other parts. For example, a study such as this one can show that by analysing the perceptions of journalists, instead of measuring every aspect of the safety policy, it is not working as well as it could be. This is different from the view which holds that statistical standards and evidence can demonstrate degrees of success or failure of a policy. For example because of variables outside the scope of this safety policy it cannot just be evaluated in terms of how many journalists were killed as opposed to how many could have been killed. It is recommended, however, that some indicators could profitably be developed in future work to measure areas such as the extent to which flak jackets are worn consistently and whether safety training is keeping pace with changing conditions in the field, not withstanding its blurring with time in the minds of the journalists.

In the light of these theoretical insights, this study has made recommendations in the hope that they would be taken up in order to amend the 'Joint code of practice for journalists working in conflict zones' to help make it a more effective policy. If there is no action, however, to officially include journalists in the review of this policy and to take seriously their suggestions, it is likely to remain a document that could be better realised, and indeed also amended and improved. This would also potentially increase the gap in understanding between journalists and their superiors. In the context of journalistic work becoming increasingly dangerous, television news agency managers need to engage broadly with journalists about safety policy issues.

Appendix I
Joint code of practice for journalists working in conflict zones.

Adopted by APTN, Reuters, BBC, CNN and ITN on November 16, 2000 at the News World Conference in Barcelona, Spain.

1. The preservation of human life and safety is paramount. Staff and freelancers should be made aware that unwarranted risks in pursuit of a story are unacceptable and must be strongly discouraged. Assignments to war zones or hostile environments must be voluntary and should only involve experienced news gatherers and those under their direct supervision.
2. All staff and freelancers asked to work in hostile environments must have access to appropriate safety training and retraining. Employers are encouraged to make this mandatory.
3. Employers must provide efficient safety equipment to all staff and freelancers assigned to hazardous locations.
4. All staff and freelancers should be afforded personal insurance while working in hostile areas, including coverage against death and personal injury.
5. Employers are to provide and encourage the use of voluntary and confidential counselling for all staff and freelancers returning from hostile areas or after the coverage of distressing events.
6. Media companies and their representatives are neutral observers. No member of the media should carry a firearm in their course of their work.
7. We will work together to establish a databank of safety information, including the exchange of up-to-date safety assessments of hostile and dangerous areas.
8. We will work with other broadcasters and organisations to safeguard journalists in the field.

Source:
'Setting the Standard: A Commitment to Frontline Journalism; An Obligation to Frontline Journalism'. The Freedom Forum European Centre. September 20, 2000.

Appendix II
Letter from the Gil Moreno De Mora Family to the Freedom Forum

Miguel Gil Moreno was an exceptional journalist and human being. From Bosnia to Kosovo, Zaire to Chechnya, Miguel covered conflict and its innocent victims with compassion and courage. His achievements were rewarded with the Rory Peck Award (1998) and the Royal Television Society Award (2000), both for best cameraman. He was killed on assignment for APTN in Sierra Leone, on May 24, 2000. Miguel was 32.

Our family wishes to ensure his death was not simply a tragedy, another statistic in the sad history of journalists who have died while covering the stories they believed in.

Specifically, we wish to see a constructive and effective debate focusing on the issues raised by Miguel's death. We urge that the debate address in detail the obligations of news organisations to the journalists who are risking their lives to cover international news stories. The obligations must include protection, insurance, safety training, equipment and support, and counselling.

We call on news organisations to honour Miguel's memory by reaffirming their commitment to frontline news-gathering and the vital role it plays in serving the word's conscience.

There currently exists no common or universal standards governing news organisations' policies and procedures for such areas as insurance, training, hazardous duty, and terms of employment and benefits for freelancers, fixed stringers and local staff.

We urge the industry to embrace the following universal standards:

- Insurance: appropriate and sufficient life and injury insurance coverage.
- Training: mandatory safety training for all staff undertaking assignments in areas of conflict or other hazard, or locally employed in such areas.
- Protection: ensuring frontline staff has access to appropriate resources to ensure their safety.
- Post-assignment Assistance: recognition that the dangers of frontline assignments are not just physical.
- Monitoring and Evaluation: a commitment to monitoring and, where necessary, modifying policies and procedures on an on-going basis.

It is our hope that "Setting the Standard" will serve as a forum for addressing these issues.

Sincerely,
Gil Moreno de Mora Family

Source:
'Setting the Standard: A Commitment to Frontline Journalism; An Obligation to Frontline Journalism'. The Freedom Forum European Centre. September 20, 2000.

Appendix III
The International News Safety Institute's Code of Practice

1. The preservation of life and safety is paramount. Staff and freelancers equally should be made aware that unwarranted risks in pursuit of a story are unacceptable and strongly discouraged. News organisations are urged to consider safety first, before competitive advantage.
2. Assignments to war and other danger zones must be voluntary and only involve experienced news gatherers and those under their direct supervision. No career should suffer as a result of refusing a dangerous assignment. Editors at base or journalists in the field may decide to terminate a dangerous assignment after proper consultation with one another.
3. All journalists and media staff must receive appropriate hostile environment and risk awareness training before being assigned to a danger zone. Employers are urged to make this mandatory.
4. Employers should ensure before assignment that journalists are fully up to date on the political, physical and social conditions prevailing where they are due to work and are aware of international rules of armed conflict as set out in the Geneva Conventions and other key documents of humanitarian law.
5. Employers must provide efficient safety equipment and medical and health safeguards appropriate to the threat to all staff and freelances assigned to hazardous locations.
6. All journalists should be afforded personal insurance while working in hostile areas, including cover against personal injury and death. There should be no discrimination between staff and freelancers.
7. Employers should provide free access to confidential counselling for journalists involved in coverage of distressing events. They should train managers in recognition of post traumatic stress, and provide families of journalists in danger areas with timely advice on the safety of their loved-ones.
8. Journalists are neutral observers. No member of the media should carry a firearm in the course of their work.
9. Governments and all military and security forces are urged to respect the safety of journalists in their areas of operation, whether or not accompanying their own forces. They must not restrict unnecessarily freedom of movement or compromise the right of the news media to gather and disseminate information.
10. Security forces must never harass, intimidate or physically attack journalists going about their lawful business.

Source: International News Safety Institute: http:www.newssafety.com/safety/index.htm

Appendix IV
Questionnaire for full-time journalists

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study on safety. It will be published as a Masters thesis in Journalism and Media Studies at Rhodes University and may also appear elsewhere. In this regard please indicate in the space provided, whether you would like to remain anonymous. If so, your name will not be mentioned anywhere in this study or as being connected with it in anyway.

This questionnaire should take no longer than 10 to 15 minutes for you to complete. The time you give to this will help produce information that could help improve safety issues for journalists.

Please feel free to add any extra detail or anecdote you believe is relevant in answering the following questions where space is provided.

1. **Would you like to remain anonymous?**
   (YES/NO)
2. **Please enter your name OR the Respondent Number you have been given.**

The document below is called the 'Joint code of practice for journalists working in conflict zones'. It was drawn up by news organisations including APTN and Reuters TV and adopted at the News World Conference in Barcelona on November 16, 2000. Please read it through as subsequent questions relate to its contents:

Joint code of practice for journalists working in conflict zones.

1. The preservation of life and safety is paramount. Staff and freelancers should be made aware that unwarranted risks in pursuit of a story are unacceptable and must be strongly discouraged. Assignments to war zones or hostile environments must be voluntary and should only involve experienced news gatherers and those under their direct supervision.
2. All staff and freelancers asked to work in hostile environments must have access to appropriate training and retraining. Employers are urged to make this mandatory.
3. Employers must provide efficient safety equipment to all staff and freelancers assigned to hazardous locations.
4. All staff and freelancers should be afforded personal insurance while working in hostile areas, including coverage against death and personal injury.
5. Employers are to provide and encourage the use of confidential counselling for all staff and freelancers returning from hostile areas or after coverage of distressing events.
6. Media companies and their representatives are neutral observers. No member of the media should carry a firearm in their course of their work.
7. We will work together to establish a databank of safety information, including the exchange of up-to-date safety assessments of hostile and dangerous areas.

8. We will work with other broadcasters and organizations to safeguard journalists in the field.

3. Have you seen this document before?
(YES/NO)
4. If 'YES', how and when did you get to see it?
5. If 'NO' please tick any of these safety elements you may have heard about through any other means.
   a. Don't take risks in pursuing a story if you may be killed or injured.
   b. You may refuse a dangerous assignment
   c. Journalists in conflict zones should be supervised by an experienced colleague.
   d. You must be given safety equipment.
   e. You must have safety training.
   f. You must have retraining in safety.
   g. You should have personal insurance while working in conflict zones.
   h. Your employer provides and encourages counselling.
   i. No member of the media should carry a firearm while on assignment.

6. How did you hear about these elements?
7. Do you comply with any of the elements while on a dangerous assignment?
(YES/NO)
8. If 'YES', please give brief details of which elements you comply with and say why.
9. Were you consulted in the drawing up or implementation of the 'Joint code of practice' safety guidelines (above)?
(YES/NO)
10. If 'YES', please elaborate.
11. If you were not consulted, how would you like to have been, if at all?
12. Do you know of any camera operators or producers who were involved in drawing up or implementing the 'Joint code of practice' safety guidelines?
(YES/NO/DON'T KNOW)
13. If 'YES', please give a brief description.
14. Have you had safety training as part of your company's policy or practice?
(YES/NO)
15. If 'YES', please say which course it was, when you did it, and who paid for it.
16. If 'YES', do you believe this course has improved your safety in the field?
(YES/NO/DON'T KNOW)
17. Have you been on a refresher safety training course?
(YES/NO/NOT APPLICABLE
18. Which of the following protective items are you given to use on a dangerous assignment, and when? (ALWAYS, OFTEN, SOMETIMES or NEVER)
   a. Flak jacket
   b. Stab vest
   c. Helmet
   d. Gas mask

e. **First aid kit**
f. **Armoured vehicle**

19. Are you automatically given this equipment before going on a dangerous assignment or did you have to ask for it?
(GIVEN IT/HAVE TO ASK FOR IT/OTHER – please specify)
20. Do you wear a flak jacket on dangerous assignments?
(YES/NO/SOMETIMES)
21. Please elaborate.
22. Do you believe that compliance with the safety guidelines, if they are operational in your work experience, would be a help or a hindrance to your job?
(HELP/HINDRANCE/OTHER – please specify)
23. Please elaborate.
24. Do you believe that journalists must take some responsibility for their safety?
(YES/NO)
25. Have you ever refused a dangerous assignment?
(YES/NO)
26. If 'YES', please give details about the assignment, why you refused and what happened. If 'NO', please say why.
27. Do you know of any other journalist who has refused a dangerous assignment?
(YES/NO/DON'T KNOW)
28. If 'YES', please give a brief description of the context or circumstances in which it occurred.
29. Have you or any other journalist you know, ever made an excuse to get out of going on a dangerous assignment or to leave one early?
(YES/NO/DON'T KNOW)
30. If 'YES', please give a brief description
31. Tick if you believe that any of the freelancers below should be given safety training and if they should be provided with insurance cover.
a. Drivers
b. Translators
c. Fixers
d. Journalists

32. Please elaborate
33. Are you able to balance the competitive nature of your work with safety issues?
YES/NO
34. Please elaborate

Thank you for completing this survey. You may be contacted with follow-up questions.

Appendix V
Questionnaire for freelance journalists

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study on safety. It will be published as a Masters thesis in Journalism and Media Studies at Rhodes University and may also appear elsewhere. In this regard please indicate in the space provided, whether you would like to remain anonymous. If so, your name will not be mentioned anywhere in this study or as being connected with it in anyway.

This questionnaire should take no longer than 10 to 15 minutes for you to complete. The time you give to this will help produce information that could help improve safety issues for journalists.

Please feel free to add any extra detail or anecdote you believe is relevant in answering the following questions where space is provided.

1. **Would you like to remain anonymous?**
   (YES/NO)
2. **Please enter your name OR the Respondent Number you have been given.**

The document below is called the 'Joint code of practice for journalists working in conflict zones'. It was adopted by news organisations including APTN and Reuters TV at the News World Conference in Barcelona on November 16, 2000. Please read it through as subsequent questions relate to its contents:

Joint code of practice for journalists working in conflict zones.

1. The preservation of life and safety is paramount. Staff and freelancers should be made aware that unwarranted risks in pursuit of a story are unacceptable and must be strongly discouraged. Assignments to war zones or hostile environments must be voluntary and should only involve experienced news gatherers and those under their direct supervision.
2. All staff and freelancers asked to work in hostile environments must have access to appropriate training and retraining. Employers are urged to make this mandatory.
3. Employers must provide efficient safety equipment to all staff and freelancers assigned to hazardous locations.
4. All staff and freelancers should be afforded personal insurance while working in hostile areas, including coverage against death and personal injury.
5. Employers are to provide and encourage the use of confidential counselling for all staff and freelancers returning from hostile areas or after coverage of distressing events.
6. Media companies and their representatives are neutral observers. No member of the media should carry a firearm in their course of their work.
7. We will work together to establish a databank of safety information, including the exchange of up-to-date safety assessments of hostile and dangerous areas.

8. We will work with other broadcasters and organizations to safeguard journalists in the field.

3. Have you seen this document before?
(YES/NO)
4. If 'YES', how and when did you get to see it?
5. If 'NO' please tick any of these safety elements you may have heard about through any other means.
   a. Don't take risks in pursuing a story if you may be killed or injured.
   b. You may refuse a dangerous assignment
   c. Journalists in conflict zones should be supervised by an experienced colleague.
   d. You must be given safety equipment.
   e. You must have safety training.
   f. You must have retraining in safety (refresher course).
   g. You should have personal insurance while working in conflict zones.
   h. Your employer provides and encourages counselling.
   i. No member of the media should carry a firearm.

6. How did you hear about these elements?
7. Do you comply with any of the elements while on a dangerous assignment?
(YES/NO)
8. Please give brief details of which elements you comply with and say why.
9. Were you consulted in the drawing up or implementation of the 'Joint code of practice' safety guidelines (above)?
(YES/NO)
10. If 'YES', please elaborate.
11. If you were not consulted, how would you like to have been, if at all?
12. Do you know of any camera operators or producers who were involved in drawing up the 'Joint code of practice' safety guidelines (above)?
(YES/NO/DON'T KNOW)
13. If 'YES', please give a brief description.
14. Have you had safety training as part of Reuters TV and APTN's company policy or practice?
(YES/NO)
15. If 'YES', please say which course you did, when you did it, and who paid for it.
16. If 'YES', do you believe this course has improved your safety in the field?
(YES/NO/DON'T KNOW/NOT APPLICABLE)
17. Have you been on a refresher safety training course?
(YES/NO/NOT APPLICABLE)
18. When working for APTN or Reuters TV, which of the following protective items are you given to use on a dangerous assignment.
(ALWAYS, OFTEN, SOMETIMES or NEVER)
   a. Flak jacket
   b. Stab vest

c. Helmet
d. Gas mask
e. First aid kit
f. Armoured vehicle

19. Are you automatically given this equipment before going on a dangerous assignment for Reuters TV or APTN, or do you have to ask for it?
(GIVEN IT/HAVE TO ASK FOR IT/OTHER – please specify)
20. Do you wear a flak jacket on dangerous assignments?
(YES/NO/SOMETIMES)
21. Please elaborate.
22. Do you believe that compliance with the safety guidelines, if they are operational in your work experience, would be a help or a hindrance to your job?
(HELP/HINDRANCE/OTHER – please specify)
23. Please elaborate.
24. Do you believe that journalists must take some responsibility for their safety?
(YES/NO)
25. Have you ever refused a dangerous assignment?
(YES/NO)
26. If 'YES', please give details about the assignment, why you refused and what happened. If no, please say why.
27. Do you know of any other journalist who has refused a dangerous assignment?
(YES/NO/DON'T KNOW)
28. If 'YES', please give a brief description of the context or circumstances in which it occurred.
29. Have you or any other journalist you know, ever made an excuse to get out of going on a dangerous assignment or to leave one early?
(YES/NO/DON'T KNOW)
30. If 'YES', please give a brief description.
31. Tick if you believe that any of the freelancers listed below should be given safety training and if they should be provided with insurance cover.
a. Drivers
b. Translators
c. Fixers
d. Journalists
32. Please elaborate
33. Are you able to balance the competitive nature of your work with safety issues?
YES/NO
34. Please elaborate

Thank you for completing this survey. You may be contacted with follow-up questions.

Appendix VI
Questionnaire for Managers

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. It will be published as a Masters thesis at Rhodes University and may also appear elsewhere. In this regard please indicate in the space provided below whether you would like to remain anonymous. If so, your name will not be mentioned anywhere in this study or as being connected with it in anyway. If you wish to be named you are also entitled to ask that certain of your comments be anonymous. If so, please indicate next to those comments.

This questionnaire should take no longer than 10 to 15 minutes for you to complete.

Please give details and any anecdotes you feel may be relevant when answering the following questions where space is provided.

1. **Would you like to remain anonymous?**
   (YES/NO)
2. **Please enter your name OR the Respondent Number you have been given.**

The document below is called the 'Joint code of practice for journalists working in conflict zones'. It was adopted by news organisations including APTN and Reuters TV at the News World Conference in Barcelona on November 16, 2000. Please read it through as subsequent questions relate to its contents:

Joint code of practice for journalists working in conflict zones.

2. The preservation of life and safety is paramount. Staff and freelancers should be made aware that unwarranted risks in pursuit of a story are unacceptable and must be strongly discouraged. Assignments to war zones or hostile environments must be voluntary and should only involve experienced news gatherers and those under their direct supervision.
3. All staff and freelancers asked to work in hostile environments must have access to appropriate training and retraining. Employers are urged to make this mandatory.
4. Employers must provide efficient safety equipment to all staff and freelancers assigned to hazardous locations.
5. All staff and freelancers should be afforded personal insurance while working in hostile areas, including coverage against death and personal injury.
6. Employers are to provide and encourage the use of confidential counselling for all staff and freelancers returning from hostile areas or after coverage of distressing events.
7. Media companies and their representatives are neutral observers. No member of the media should carry a firearm in their course of their work.
8. We will work together to establish a databank of safety information, including the exchange of up-to-date safety assessments of hostile and dangerous areas.

9. We will work with other broadcasters and organizations to safeguard journalists in the field.

3. Were you involved in drawing up this document?
(YES/NO)
4. If 'YES' was your involvement direct or indirect?
5. How is it communicated to staff at your organisation and who communicates it?
6. Were producers or camera operators consulted specifically about this document, whether before of after its formulation?
(YES/NO)
7. Does the company have a process by which this policy is reviewed?
(YES/NO/DON'T KNOW)
8. If so, who is invited to contribute to this review and how often does a review take place?
9. If there is no review process, should there be measures in place to ensure that the policy be updated when and if necessary?
(YES/NO/DON'T KNOW)
10. Who in management is responsible for ensuring that this safety policy is adhered to?
11. To what extent are journalists (producers and camera operators) expected to take responsibility for adhering to this safety policy?
12. How is it ensured that journalists in the field and editors in the London office abide by the policy?
13. What criteria are used for assigning journalists to conflict zones?
14. Is it realistic, given the competitive pressure to keep up with the opposition agency, to allow staff to refuse a dangerous assignment?
15. Please elaborate.
16. Have any of your staff refused either to go on a dangerous assignment or to cover something while on assignment which they believe to be dangerous?
(YES/NO)
17. If so, how did that process work?
18. Do you believe that some of your staff sometimes make excuses to avoid a dangerous assignment or to leave the assignment early?
(YES/NO/DON'T KNOW)
19. If so, please elaborate.
20. What type of psychological counselling does your organisation provide for staff who cover conflict? Please tick as many as apply.
a. Voluntary
b. Compulsory
c. Face-to-face
d. In language of their choice
e. In English
f. Telephonic
g. Long-term or open-ended
h. Short-term or a specific number of sessions
21. Who counts as freelancer in terms of this policy? (Note as many as you think):

a. Camera operator
b. Producer
c. Fixer
d. Driver
e. Translator

22. Do you send any of these freelancers on training courses?
(YES/NO/OTHER – please specify)
23. Elaborate, if need be, for example on which categories of freelancer in particular.
24. Is your staff required to take extra safety equipment on dangerous assignments for any freelancers they may hire?
(YES/NO)
25. Are freelancers required to sign any form of contract as proof of employment, for insurance purposes?
(YES/NO)
26. If any of your journalists do not wear flak jackets and they get killed or injured, would your insurance pay out less than if they had been wearing them?
(YES/NO/DON'T KNOW)

Thank you for completing this survey. You may be contacted with follow-up questions.

Appendix VII
Abbreviations

ABC – American Broadcasting Corporation

AP – The Associated Press

APTN – Associated Press Television News

BBC – British Broadcasting Corporation

CAI – Computer Assisted Interviewing

Centurion – Centurion Risk Assessment Services Ltd

CNN – Cable News Network

CPJ – Committee to Protect Journalists

EBU – European Broadcasting Union

EVN – Eurovision

HQ – Headquarters

ICT – Information and Communication Technology

INSI – International News Safety Institute

ITN – Independent Television News

MA – Master of Arts

Mini-DV – Mini Digital Video Camera

NBC – National Broadcasting Corporation

NSG – News Security Group

OED – Oxford English Dictionary

Reuters TV – Reuters Television

SABC – South African Broadcasting Corporation

WTN – Worldwide Television News

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Interviews

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Leonard, T. Johannesburg. (20 October 2004) – Face-to-face.

Matthews, J. Johannesburg (19 September 2004) – face-to-face.

Nkosi, M. Johannesburg (1 October 2004) – face-to-face.

Pinder, R. by email (24 June 2004 and 2005).

Surveys and follow-up interviews

[In order to protect the identity of the respondents they are noted only by randomly-generated case numbers and job description.]

Journalist respondents

A259: Cameraman (face-to-face).

A387: Cameraman (face-to-face).

A735: Producer/cameraman (by email and telephone).

A749: Producer/cameraman (by email).

A912: Cameraman (by email).

A946: Producer/cameraman (by telephone).

A989: Cameraman (by telephone).

B178: Producer (by email).

B276: Producer/cameraman (by email).

B462: Producer/cameraman (by email and telephone).

B364: Producer/cameraman (by email and telephone).

B669: Cameraman (by telephone and face-to-face).

B952: Producer (by email).

C734: Producer (by email).

D415: Cameraman (by email).

D965: Producer (by email).

E266: Producer (face-to-face).

E382: Cameraman (by email).

E863: Cameraman (by email).

E873: Cameraman (by telephone).

Manager respondents

F339: (by email).

F767: (by email).

G652: (by email).

G872: (by email).