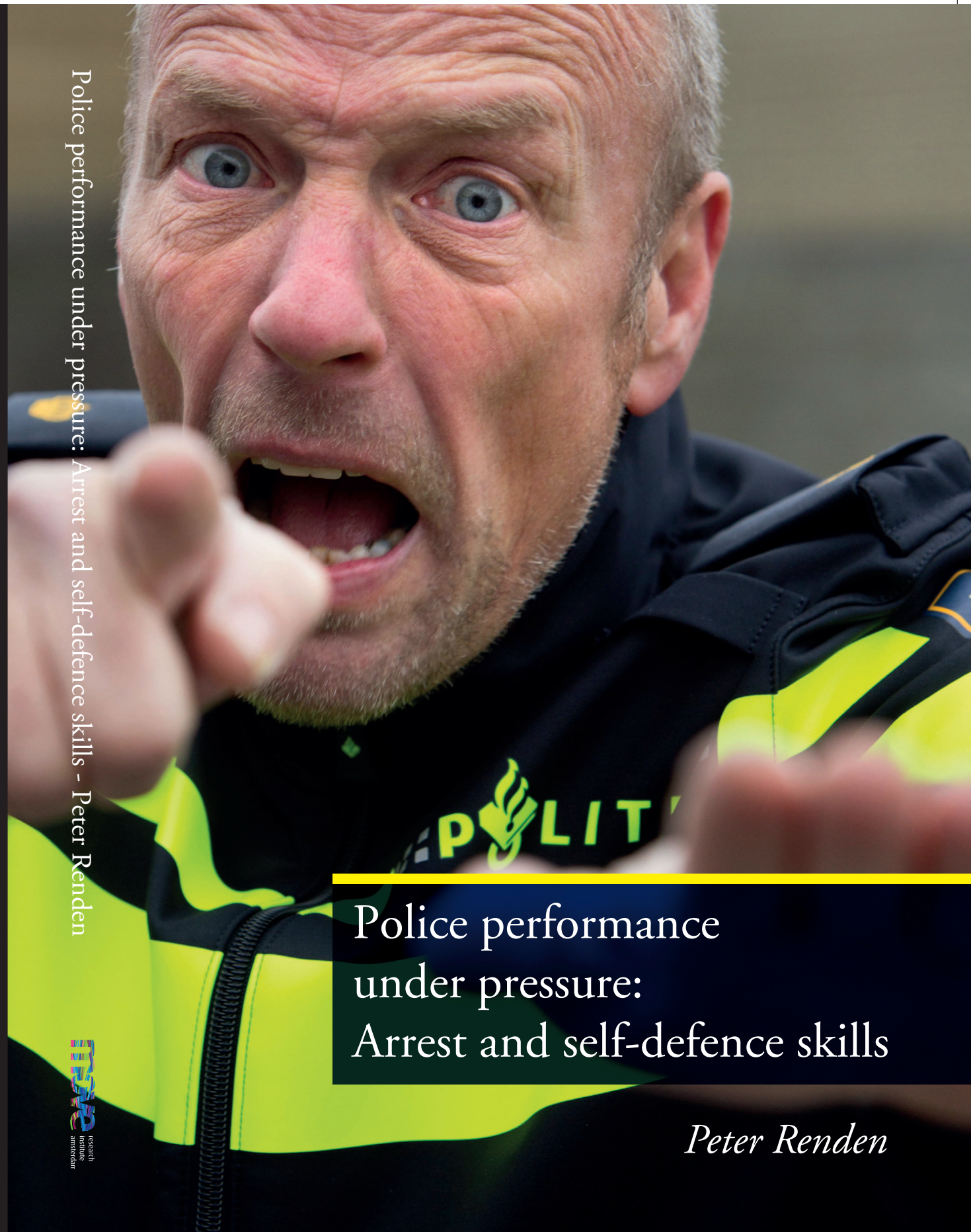


Police officers regularly have to perform arrest and self-defence skills (ASDS) during their work, for instance, when a person aggressively insults an officer, resists arrest, or starts fighting. Even though such situations can be stressful, police training hardly anticipates on performing under anxiety. This thesis reports five studies that investigated how well officers feel prepared, how they perform in threatening situations, and whether the current form of training can be improved. Overall, the reported studies show that anxiety negatively affects ASDS performance. Remarkably, performance seemed similarly affected among officers with different levels of experience. Therefore, it seems that officers also need to train more under high levels of anxiety. In specifying realistic training for ASDS, officers seem to benefit from reflex-based self-defence training. After such training, officers were better at noticing signals of imminent danger, anticipating on a potential attack, and in case an attack occurred, at using their primary reflexes as effective responses. Better performance in threatening situations is desirable to increase safety for officers, suspects and citizens in general.

Police performance under pressure: Arrest and self-defence skills - Peter Renden



## Police performance under pressure: Arrest and self-defence skills

*Peter Renden*

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