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The Case Head

The Official Publication of the Massachusetts Law Enforcement
Firearms Instructors & Armors Association

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2011 TRAINING SCHEDULE

The Case Head

The official publication of the
Massachusetts Law Enforcement Firearms Instructors & Armorers Association
P.O. Box 253, Princeton, MA 01541-0253

MISSION STATEMENT

The Massachusetts Law Enforcement Firearms Instructors' & Armorers' Association was formed to promote professionalism, continuing education, improvement in training methods and techniques of the proper law enforcement use of firearms in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The Association strives to promote and foster mutual cooperation between instructors. Through discussion and a common interest in law enforcement firearms training, officer survival and tactical skills, MLEFIAA hopes to keep the members at the forefront of firearms training. Through our monthly meetings and annual training conference, we provide a means for the exchange of ideas and information regarding law enforcement firearms training, training methods, educational activities and new firearms technologies.

MLEFIAA currently has over 400 members. While mainly from Massachusetts, our membership extends internationally to countries as far away as Sweden. The Association endeavors to secure new members from the law enforcement training community who are engaged in the field of firearms training, maintenance, education or related fields. Our goal is to continuously upgrade the level of firearms training of law enforcement personnel here in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Membership is offered at two levels - Active & Associate. Active membership is open to all duly sworn law enforcement officers of any local, county, state, federal or specialized law enforcement agency within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts; whose official duties include the training of law enforcement personnel in the proper use of firearms; or whose duties involve the maintenance and repair of firearms for their respective agencies.

Associate membership is open to sworn law enforcement firearms instructors and armorers from agencies outside of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, non-sworn firearms instructors & armorers working within an agency within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and representatives of private industry who are engaged in the design, development, manufacture, or training in firearms, ammunition and other related technologies designed for law enforcement use.

Complete details can be found at our website: www.MLEFIAA.org

Articles & Letters to the Editor

Articles and letters should be no more than 1000 words in length and submitted in MS Word. Any photos should be in JPEG format. MLEFIAA encourages a healthy discussion of training issues but we require that you keep it level headed and respect opposing views. You do not have to agree, but we will not publish articles that are inflammatory or otherwise do not uphold the reputation of this Association.

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Holster Retention Standards - Are They Standard?

There is a vast discrepancy in how holster manufacturers rate their products with regards to retention security. Because there is no industry standard, they inexperienced buyer can be left confused and often misled in thinking their holster is very secure. Adding to the confusion is the inexperienced clerk at the police supply store who has never used a security holster never mind understanding how it works. This is a situation which must change.

What exactly constitutes a retention level of security? Is it a mechanical device or a physical manipulation that must be accomplished before the weapon can be withdrawn? To date, Safariland is the only company which actually has defined the retention levels. While not perfect, it is the closest thing we have to establishing a uniform rating system which the end user can effectively use.

In my opinion, a retention level must be a physical or mechanical device which must be unlocked, opened or otherwise disengaged in order to draw the weapon. Screws which increase the friction fit between the weapon and holster do not count. A system where the user pushes one button and two or more retention devices unlock is not a double or triple retention system. It is a single level system. This may not be a popular statement with some holster makers but this is an officer safety issue.

Some holsters use a system where the trigger guard or other part of the weapon fits into a groove and is held there by way of spring tension. This should not count as a retention device. Holsters such as the Fobus and other Kydex open top holsters are examples of this. The reason for this is that while this system can keep the weapon from

accidentally from falling out, it does nothing to prevent a gun grab.

Several models have a protrusion or lug which fits into the ejection port securing the weapon from a straight up draw. Because this requires a rocking motion to disengage the lug, it could be considered a retention device. Personally I would feel more comfortable if this was used in conjunction with one or more other retention methods.

If a holster incorporates a system where two or more retention devices are released with one action such as pressing a button or lever, this should only count as a single retention level. While there may be several devices holding the weapon in the holster, an assailant only has to defeat one which in turn trips others. This is the crux of holster retention. The design must make it difficult for an unauthorized person to access the

2011 Meeting Calendar

Jan 25, 2011
S&W Academy
(Elections)

February 22
Assumption College
(Worcester)

March 22
Andover P. D.

April 26
MPTC HQ / Academy
Randolph

May 24
Amesbury P. D.

June 28
TBA

July & August
No meeting

Sept 27-29
Annual Instructor
Conference
Harvard, MA

October 25
Westminster P. D.

November 22
TBA

December
No meeting - Merry
Christmas

Watch your E-mail for details

Evolution of Strategy and Tactics to Ongoing Deadly Action

By Fred Leland

An **active shooter** is defined as "... an armed person who has used deadly physical force on other persons and continues to do so while having unrestricted access to additional victims."^[1]

The vision most law enforcement officers have when it comes to an active shooter is one or two people with guns moving through a building, randomly shooting anyone in their path. Active shootings are often thought of as taking place in a public place, such as a school where kids attend.

Westside Middle School, Thurston High School, Columbine High School, Virginia Tech, the Amish school house in Pennsylvania and many other schools, universities and campuses have been victims of an active shooting incident. The fact that many of the offenders are children themselves, combined with intense media attention, cements the idea that active shooters take out their rage on schools.

Unconventional Methods of Attack

The fact is that an active shooting can take place in any environment—in the streets, as in the case of gang related violence or cornered criminals in an effort to gain the advantage; at the workplace, often by a disgruntled employee; at a shopping mall, perhaps by a kid who lost his girlfriend or job, even in nursing homes, hospitals and neighborhoods.

We are witness to a worldwide *evolving threat* from highly trained active shooters. Terrorists have used small arms and small unit swarming tactics at luxury hotels, restaurants, train stations, community centers, cinemas, police headquarters and other public locations. Recent examples include the coordinated attacks in Mumbai, India and the premeditated shootings at Fort Hood, Texas and the gangs and narco-terrorists on the Mexican border.

The North Hollywood shooting in 1997 is yet another example of a conventional crime turned unconven-

tional, when an armed confrontation between two heavily-armed bank robbers and the LAPD. It started when the robbers were engaged while leaving the bank they just robbed by LAPD patrol officers.

Some had a difficult time describing the Beslan Russia school siege and massacre in 2004. It was a siege, a hostage situation, a terrorist act and an active shooting situation. It is also underscored how an adversary can use a combination of tactics in an effort to disrupt our response and delay our actions.

How should we handle adversaries who use small arms, small unit tactics and multiple techniques converging on multiple targets from numerous directions in a single incident? The answer lies in our dedication and discipline to prepare and train for these incidents.

It is imperative that we use our capabilities to the fullest: awareness, strength of character, information and intelligence gathering, decision making abilities and tactical skills are essential to successfully combating any active shooting situation. It is critical that we penetrate the decision making cycle of an adversary to soften his resolve, disorient his mental images, disrupt his operations, and overload his system so he either stops his actions and complies or is disrupted by the terms of law enforcement.

An active shooting can take place anywhere, any time. And the types of active shooters vary greatly in their levels of sophistication, planning, preparation and training and their commitment. In a study conducted by the law enforcement training company Hard Tactics researcher William Barchers, concluded that; *the faster a shooter is confronted, the higher the probability of event resolution with minimum loss of life. The group studied 40 active shooting incidents. Seventeen incidents were resolved by the shooters themselves, with the shooter ceasing his attack and committing suicide, or attempting to do so. In at least three cases, the shooters ceased*

their attacks when verbally confronted by someone they knew. In the remaining cases, the shooters were overcome by physical confrontation by the intended victims.

One of the most important facts to emerge from this study was that of the forty studied incidents, only six were resolved by police. We must continually learn-unlearn and relearn from past incidents and then adapt the science and art of tactics to the unfolding circumstances.^[2]

Time and Failure to Adapt... the first enemies of law enforcement

Time is often the enemy of law enforcement in the case of an active shooting because initially the shooter dictates the tempo. Most active shootings begin and end in 8 minutes. The Mumbai terrorist attack carried out by 10 men in 5, 2 man teams lasted over 60 hours and left 195 people dead and 295 wounded.

Because of this fact we in law enforcement must not only focus on the standard training, diamond and T-Y formations and moving towards the guns. We must employ superior situational awareness to read the scene, recognize the pattern of what's going on and channel our ability to think on our feet. The elements of a strategic and tactical mindset include **observing** our environment; **orienting** to climate of the situation; making good sound implicit **decisions**; and taking **action** to solve the problem. We solve the problem by applying *what we know* to the situation at hand, known as 'operational art'.

Full Spectrum Police Officers and Operational Art

Following the Columbine incident and criticisms of the law enforcement response in that case, many learned that "setting up a perimeter and waiting for SWAT to arrive," while deadly action is taking place, is unsound strategically and tactically. The lessons learned here and from

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Evolution of Strategy and Tactics to Ongoing Deadly Action (continued)

many other incidents have reshaped law enforcements thoughts on proper strategy and tactics in handling violent ongoing deadly actions.

Most in law enforcement could tell you exactly what's expected of them when responding to an active shooting situation. Go to the location of ongoing deadly action, wait shortly for back-up 1, 2 or 3 other officers form a diamond or T-Y formation and then march to the sounds of the guns and stop the ongoing threat. If there is shooting going on, keep moving towards the sound of the guns, engage the threat and stop it. There are documented cases where this tactic has worked well in resolving conventional *active shooter situation* and are viable tactics under the right conditions. Those conditions being, one or two people, not highly trained, armed and actively engaged in shooting innocent people. Our training in the conventional active shooting response can and does work with these conditions present.

The traditional 4 man diamond formation, which most in law enforcement have trained in, has been adapted due to the time/risk factor and the numbers killed in these tragic incidents. The 3 man (T -Y formations), 2 man and even 1 man entries are used to engage the conventional active shooter. There is often no time to wait for SWAT and patrol officers must respond. Oftentimes we have to adapt standard tactics (science) with know how (art) to be effective in stopping these threats.

This means each cop on the street or patrolling a city, town, university or campus, a security officer on a post or military personnel defending the country abroad must possess more knowledge in understanding conflict and its resolution and the mastery of individual and small team skills to launch successful operations dealing with conflict and violence inherent in an active shooting situation. Applying this knowledge, connecting strategy and tactics, is operational art and is the often missing link in law enforce-

ment responses.

Preparation for initiative driven tactical response

The first question that must be asked in deciding what type of response is necessary in the active shootings, law enforcement responds to, should be "is immediate dynamic action required?" If lives are in "imminent" jeopardy, then the answer is yes... If it is they are in danger and no imminent threat to life exists, then the option may be a non-dynamic scaled response.

Action must do two things: (1) further friendly strategy, or (2) attack enemy strategy. By attacking enemy strategy, victory can often be won before the battle starts.[3]

Putting the friendly strategy in place allows us to "attack the enemy strategy" by containing him. His options are few, and time, in most cases is now on our side. The subject may simply see he has no options and give up, or impatience may put adversary in a disadvantageous position, we can exploit to gain advantage.

Reading the Scene

It's crucial for the first responding officers to take up positions so that they get eyes on the objective in an effort to read the scene. The information they gather is critical and must be communicated to oncoming responders so that the initial tactical set up is in an area with the least amount of risk involved to responders. They should keep in mind not to only look at the scene from their perspective but from the adversaries as well. First responding efforts can be done quickly and should focus on:

- Reading and understanding the environment
 - Reading and understanding the climate of the situation (What's going on?)
- What tactics will work in the current situation? (use insight and innovation)

· THIS IS TWO-WAY STREET
"FRIENDLY & ADVERSARIAL" (both:

Observe-Orient, Decide and Act) Dynamic Encounters

Some have described and compared law enforcement encounters as either static or, dynamic. It's my view that there is no such thing as a static law enforcement encounter. All encounters whether they progressively evolve over a longer period of time or erupt rapidly in a short period of time, without warning, circumstances surrounding law enforcement encounters are all dynamic. Time is moving forward, circumstances changing and the ability of responders to adapt to the ongoing circumstances is always critical.

In responding to dynamic encounters the protection of life is our priority, always. If the circumstances change and we are suddenly put into a spontaneous set of conditions where life is threatened then, dynamic responses are required. Action is now the critical component to seizing and maintaining the initiative. We must now set the tempo with fluid initiative driven action with our focus being to stop the ongoing threat. To do so we must know both the art and science of tactics and how to apply this knowledge to the unfolding conditions.

Tactical response and rescue teams

The team whether it consists of 1, 2, 3 or 4 men should be made up of tactically savvy people. Officers, who possess the 5% mindset, and know the tactical concepts to utilize and have been trained to an effective level, will be the most effective in using these tactics.

An understanding and ability to apply the tactical formations, such as the diamond formation, which is used to move to and from, or across danger areas or down hallways in schools and office buildings and consists of 4 people, the point man who focuses on the front, the right and left cover men, who focus on the right or the left, specific to their position and then the rear guard who focus on the rear. All communicate and en-

Evolution of Strategy and Tactics to Ongoing Deadly Action (continued)

gage threats in their area of responsibility.

The T-Y formation is commonly used with 3 members in the team. The T-Y formations are used for the same purpose as the diamond, rapid movement, good observation and ability to engage adversary. All formations offer their own strengths and weakness mostly centered on fields of fire and tactical movement and clearing rooms and intersections (T, L and cross) encountered in a building.

Two-man tactics are commonly used by law enforcement in active shootings. One officer and back up is the most prevalent tactical team in policing, although, movement of two men in a tactical way, is not consistently taught in law enforcement. This must change. In a two-man team, contact cover is done by both with each man being responsible for 180 degrees of their area. Again verbal and non-verbal communication is critical to ensure safety and effectiveness.

One-man entry^[4] is a controversial entry technique and it's only used as a last resort in engaging ongoing deadly action. It's obvious to see the disadvantages in going it alone in an active shooting situation although when the deadly action is taking place on the part of the adversary and the lone officer is positioned at an advantage the need to enter and take action may be the only way to stop the threat. It's imperative that the lone officer be capable in his tactical ability to engage alone.

The focus of these formations is to enhance rapid movement to the threat and maintain security through collective observations. Keeping in mind where, you may individually and/or collectively have to move once the threat is engaged. The focus of effort is movement in these formations to get you in a position to effectively stop the threat.

As the numbers in the tactical response team gets smaller the work load becomes much more difficult as there are fewer eyes on the surroundings. It is important to adjust your pace as the situation and your

manpower dictates. Speed is often times gained by positioning verses an over exaggerated sense of urgency. Keep this in mind.

Room Clearing

Coordination and setup is an important consideration in room clearing and is facilitated by your team movement and proper approach and evaluation prior to the setup. Observation of doors, how they open and close? Is the door centered on the room or is it on the right or left side of the room? The answers to these questions dictate the technique you will use for entry. The goal is positioning to observe as much as you can before entering. In many instances before entering a room as much as 80% percent can be cleared visually before stepping off into a room. Utilize the various cornering techniques as the situation dictates. Team members are "Reading" each other, flexible and responsive to the dynamic of the situation. Superior situational awareness and timing is necessary!

Rescue teams

Rescue teams are teams used as a follow on to rescue downed and injured victims. The tactical response team's focus is on the threat and they do not stop for victims. Injured victims are the rescue team's responsibility. There are a couple of different ways these teams are utilized. Some advocate waiting to send in rescue teams once the threat has been stopped. Others advocate soon after the tactical response teams enter and clear a section rescue teams are sent in as a follow on unit who actively rescue while the adversary is still active. In short it comes down to training and preparation. Is your rescue team, tactically trained? If so using as a follow on to rescue the injured while response team is actively engaged is a viable option. If EMS is not tactically trained then rescue should wait till the threat is stopped.

Communication Considerations

When we respond to a critical incident it's important to quickly estab-

lish you are on location and have command and control. This allows others responding to know someone is present on scene and that you can communicate the situation, identify danger or kill zones and set up the perimeter in an effort to isolate and contain the situation. You must quickly put an adaptable plan together and communicate this plan, as well. This communication puts everyone involved on the same page and helps to bring order to the chaos. Now when talking about tactical communication it's important to understand that this does not mean we are constantly on the radio relaying our every move. This "over talking" on the radio or elsewhere causes more chaos and disorder. Remember our goal is to bring order to disorder, not add to it... What communication does mean is that you calmly; clearly and concisely relay critical information in a timely manner. Your every thought does not need to be coming over the radio! I know it's somewhat human nature under stress, to want everyone to know everything, but resist the urge and just communicate what's critical. ^[5]

Responding units should stay off the radio and allow the person on scene and in the best position to relay critical information. Most communication at a active shooting, should be bottom-up. The frontline is in a position to make observations, direct others and take action. Command should trust their responding personnel and be on the listening end of communication and support frontline units. If trained and prepared properly the frontline will relay critical information up the chain so command can organize needed resources. Remember, climate is contagious; panic leads to more panic, as calm leads to more calm. Adapt to the situation; do not let the situation adapt to you.

Time for "Unconventional Tactics"

Law enforcement actions must

Continued on the next page

evolve as well if we are to first detect and prevent these actions from taking place. When despite or efforts a violent ongoing deadly act does unfold we must be capable of dealing with it successfully by “penetrating our adversary’s moral-mental-physical being to dissolve his moral fiber, disorient his mental images, disrupt his operations, and overload his system—as well as subvert, shatter, seize, or otherwise subdue those moral-mental-physical bastions, connections, or activities that he depends upon—in order to destroy internal har-

mony, produce paralysis, and collapse adversary’s will to resist.” [6] This requires insight, innovation and initiative and law enforcement using unconventional strategy and tactics as our adversaries have. Conflict is a clash between two complex adaptive systems. Who wins? He who adapts faster.

Our goal in responding to ongoing deadly action is to first and foremost to protect life. We do this through superior situational awareness which

enhances or understanding of the environment and what's going on, so we can interact, adapt and position ourselves at the advantage, apply various tactics that work in stopping the threat and in protecting the innocent lives in jeopardy, which is the goal of our strategy.

[1] (Wikipedia, 2009)

[2] (Barchers, 2010)

[3] (Jr, 2008)

[4] (Borsch, 2008)

[5] (Jr., 2008)

[6] (Boyd, December 1986)

MPTC Firearms Instructor News

By Todd Bailey

The firearms training program here in Massachusetts continues to grow. Statewide Coordinator Bill Leanos released the 2011-2012 Training Year goals and changes in January.

To bring Massachusetts in line with many other states and POST systems, the minimum passing score for instructors will increase to 94%. The 100% round accountability rule will remain in effect and you must maintain 100% at the 3, 5 and 7 yard line stages.

The MPTC Shotgun program was revised and approved around the first of the year. The biggest change is the new Qualification Course of Fire. The round count has been increased from 10 rounds to 25 rounds. The dynamics of the course of fire closely approximate the Patrol Rifle program. The adoption of movement, shooting on the move, various shooting positions and engaging from cover have been included. The course emphasizes the concept of “reload what you shoot”. In other words, if you fire 3 rounds, reload 3 rounds if you can. Additionally, the shooter will need to demonstrate the ability to safely download and unload the shotgun. The new program can be found on the MPTC Firearms Instructor webpage www.mlefiaa.org/MPTC_News.html which is now hosted by this Association.

As this edition hits your computer, the MPTC should be in the final stages of reviewing and approving the new Specialty Impact Munitions course. This will be an instructor level program which should offer Massachusetts agencies a very economical alternative to the expensive manufacturer programs that are on the market. The MPTC Less Lethal Subcommittee did a great job putting this program together.

Another program coming soon will be a recruit firearms course for the Reserve Intermittent Academy. Like the part time academy, the firearms program is an abbreviated version of the full time program. The twenty hour program has been broken up into 5 four hour blocks. This will be supplemented by 4 to 6 hours of self study. This will be accomplished with an online or CD based component which the recruit will study before the first program module which will be a classroom session. This will be followed by four range sessions which take the recruit from their first shot to tactical marksmanship skills. Reserve officers who are not armed will be exempt from this program.

As a follow on to the Advanced Instructor position created last year, the Firearms Coordinator announced the inception of Master Firearms Instructor Trainers (MFIT). This level of instructor is the highest that can be achieved here in the Common-

wealth. Criteria includes sitting on the Firearms Training Advisory Committee or a subcommittee which reports to the Firearms Coordinator. The instructor must have shown an ongoing commitment to the program by attending at least 50% of the meetings annually and maintaining a high level of proficiency in the subjects they teach.

The requirements for Firearms Instructor Trainers (FIT) were tightened up as well. Instructor Trainers who are certified after January 1, 2011 will be required to demonstrate they attended a professional development program in the past two years. Examples of this would be an attendance or instructing at a instructor training conference (MLEFIAA, IALEFI, ILEETA, etc.) or writing an article on a firearms training related topic for a professional journal. This is all in addition to completing a 40 hour FIT class or assisting with MPTC firearms training programs for 40 hours under the direction of a current FIT or MFIT.

The MPTC Firearms Advisory Committee continues to meet monthly to discuss on going program development and training issues. The committee is privileged to have a number of agencies at the table including the State Police, FBI, Boston Police, Environmental Police, municipal law enforcement, and County Sheriffs. This is great step forward for police training here in Massachusetts.

STREET LEVEL RED TEAMING: The COP Killer

By Fred Leland

What is your preconceived perception of what I (the person who wants to assault or kill) you looks like? Is it a person with raggedy clothes, long hair and a ratty looking beard who comes from the poor side of town? Or is it a Charley Manson lookalike you have in mind? Do you perceive me the one who will assault or kill you if given the opportunity by only my size and physical characteristics? Have you ever given any thought to what makes me tick **(the "cop killer" mindset)**? Have you thought about why on most occasions I will avoid YOU, the cop? But if cornered or about to be taken off the street and put into jail, I will do everything in my power to remain free. That everything includes assaulting or killing you if necessary. You see Mr. Policeman I have made the decision, I will not go, I will not be arrested, and you will not stop me, long before I have met you.

The fact is we cop killers come in all shapes, sizes, colors and socioeconomic backgrounds. But we cop killers do have some things in common the cop should be aware of, apply to his knowledge base and then develop the skill set to observe, orient, decide and act accordingly when the cop, offender and circumstances encounter on the street.

My life was not all bad, but neither was it all that good, either. On average the cop killer is male and 26 years old. I am single with no strong ties to family although this varies as I may have been married and then divorced. My family background may have been stable as a kid, a good percentage of us cop killers grew up much like you in comfortable, average or marginal, but self-sufficient home economically speaking. Believe it or not, a small percentage of us (about 10%) came from advantaged homes while only about 15% of us cop killers come from sub-marginal (poor) economic homes. So we are in some ways not much different at least in how we were

raised.

In many cases the cop killer suffered from physical and psychological abuse. I learned to solve problems by using arguing, shouting or physical violence. It seemed to work so I began to refine my techniques and I have used them often on the street. I learned to commit crimes and take advantage of the justice system early on as a child because the significant others in my life had been involved in criminal activity. I have learned my craft from the experienced criminal and someone I admired and cared about. This way of life feels right to me because it's what I know. It's how I live! You should remember this!

I have committed crimes myself; the crimes vary involving the most serious type's murder, rape, sexual assaults, robbery and burglary and weapons violations. But us cop killers are not always participating in violent serious crime. Many of us participate in low level crimes such as larceny and theft, vandalism, disorderly conduct and the vast majority of us (75%) are involved in drugs. Many of us also abuse alcohol or drugs, making us even more unpredictable when you encountered by you.

My employment history I would describe as unstable or in many cases I am chronically unemployed. Some of us cop killers hold jobs as laborers, clerks or in the service industry or even sales but commit crimes to help support ourselves. About 25% of us have served our country in the military and have been honorably discharged. While in the military we received formal weapons and tactical training. This puts at least some of us on equal or higher ground with you when it comes to our abilities of reading our adversary and our environment and in our abilities to out-position you physically and psychologically. So often times you deal with me on a professional basis and have no idea I am the one if pressed

who will not comply with your intent.

I learned from direct experience that crime pays, until you get caught! I do not want to get caught, so, I learned to deceive you and how to fight if my deception fails. This is how I adapted and got what I wanted out of life and you are not about to take that from me. Do you understand?

In no way do I want you to think that these are the only attributes and traits of a cop killer. There are many complex social and psychological issues that contribute to creating an individual who willfully kills or attempts to kill a law enforcement officer. But what I mention here are many of the commonalities you need to beware of to avoid becoming a victim of MY intent. You see, us cop killers have a say in this game as well and you best be aware!

The source of this short post is adapted from the Federal Bureau of Investigation report; Violent Encounters: a Study of Felonious Assaults on Our Nations Law Enforcement Officers. This study took from 1992-2006 and covered over 800 incidents of felonious assaults against officers and direct interviews with cop killers. We need to train smart and hard to create and nurture the proper mindset and fight complacency. Understanding the deadly mix, of OFFICER, OFFENDER and the CIRCUMSTANCES you find yourself in are the keys to your winning on the street. You must strive to understand more about every call, every incident, and every encounter as these three components converge as they greatly influence each event. Your alertness and ability to adapt to the situation and altering just one of these components may prevent the cop killer by disrupting his decision making cycle (OODA Loop), enhancing yours. The alternative is to high a price to pay.

Upcoming Training Programs

Program	Location	Date(s)
Specialized Trauma And Rescue Tactics	Wilmington PD	March 22
Contact Lt. Scott Sencabaugh ssencabaugh@wpd.org \$85 fee		
MPTC Firearms Instructor Trainer Recert	Methuen PD	April 6
MPTC Firearms Instructor Trainer Recert	Boston PD Range Moon Island	April 7
MPTC Firearms Instructor Trainer Recert	Boylston Academy	April 7
MPTC Firearms Instructor Trainer Recert	New Bedford Woodcock Range	April 7
MPTC 2 Day Basic & Advanced Instructor Recert*	New Bedford Woodcock Range	April 14 & 15
MPTC 1 Day Basic & Advanced Instructor Recert	Riverside R&G, Hudson	FULL
MPTC Use of Force Instructor	Boylston Academy	April 19
MPTC Patrol Rifle Instructor (2 Day)	New Bedford Woodcock Range	May 5 & 6
MPTC 1 Day Basic & Advanced Instructor Recert	Harvard Sportsmans Club	May 10
MPTC Firearms Instructor Trainer Recert	Harvard Sportsmans Club	May 11
MPTC 1 Day Basic & Advanced Instructor Recert	New Bedford Woodcock Range	May 12
MPTC 1 Day Basic & Advanced Instructor Recert	Pittsfield P. D.	May 16
MPTC 2 Day Basic & Advanced Instructor Recert*	Boylston Academy	May 16 & 17
Police Pistolcraft	Grafton P. D. (MPI)	May 17
MPTC 2 Day Basic & Advanced Instructor Recert*	Methuen P. D.	May 18 & 19
MPTC Patrol Rifle Instructor (2 Day)	Groton P. D.	May 26 & 27
MPTC Use of Force Instructor	Boylston Academy	June 17
Introduction to Less Lethal Munitions	Grafton P. D. (MPI)	June 23
MPTC 2 Day Basic & Advanced Instructor Recert*	Boston PD Range Moon Island	July 18 & 19
Beretta 92 & 96 Armorers School	Wilmington P. D.	July 26
Benelli Armorer School	Wilmington P. D.	July 27
Registration on Beretta's website for these two programs \$250 fee per class		
MLEFIAA Instructor Development Conference	Harvard, MA	Sept. 27 - 29
Simunitions Instructor	Lancaster P. D.	Oct. 18 - 20
Register at www.simunition.com		

All MPTC programs require a MPTC Training Application and the Instructor Info Data Collection Form if you want a certificate. See www.mlefiaa.org/MPTC_news.html for details

*Includes Less Lethal certification. There is a charge for 40mm rounds if the instructor does not bring their own munitions. See webpage or contact the Firearms Coordinator for further details

Request for Information

Last month I suffered a retinal detachment while serving as one of several firearms instructors on the range during a recruit training course. There have been several complications during treatment and I am considering my options if my eyesight is not restored well enough to continue serving as a Police Offi-

cer. For most of my career I have also been a firearms and defensive tactics instructor as well as participating in a couple types of martial arts. Does anyone know of a documented association or casualty of retinal detachments from firearms training / usage, DT or martial arts training? Any information would be

appreciated. Please contact:

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LEOSA and New Mass. Police ID Card Information

Several requests for LEOSA information came in over the winter regarding ID cards and eligibility. The following information has been reproduced to help "pass the word".

From MLEFIAA member Ron L'Ecuier

Just to clarify, the card meets LEOSA standards for active duty officers as it has a photo and the required data, with the script on the rear I mentioned.

As far as retired officers go, their cards are essentially the same card with the word RETIRED in red beneath the photo. On the rear of the retired card is the following script: *"The person whose photograph and signature appear hereon is a qualified retired law enforcement officer in good standing, pursuant to Title 18 U.S.C. § 926C and 501 CMR 13.03. This identification, together with a Law Enforcement Officers Safety Act Training and Certification Card, allows the person appearing hereon to carry a concealed firearm in accordance with the provisions of Title 18 U.S.C. § 926C. Unlawful possession of police identification or posing as a police officer is a criminal offense."*

In other words, the retired card does not have weapons qualification information on it. If it did, we'd need to issue new ones every year. So we chose to have the ID cards be ID's only (retired cards do not expire), and to have the retiree carry a separate LEOSA qualification card. Hopefully, most LEOSA instructors have figured out a way to generate credit card-type qualification cards so that they fit in a wallet. That's what our instructors do. Hope this makes everything clear. If not, write me back.

William G. Brooks III

Deputy Chief of Police
Wellesley Police Department

LEOSA changes by Ron Glidden from MCOPA Newsletter Dec. 2010

Some recent federal changes occurred to the LEOSA law. Most changes ad-

dress qualified retired officers.

The changes in the retired section are much more extensive. Rather than say "retired from service in good standing..." as it did in the past, the LEOSA now says "Separated from service in good standing..." The minimum term of service was reduced from 15 to 10 years. In theory this might mean a reserve officer who was not retired per se, but stopped working for your agency after 11 years could be eligible for LEOSA and an ID card if he meets all of the other conditions.

The qualification portion for "separated" (formerly retired) officers is:

4) during the most recent 12-month period, has met, at the expense of the individual, the standards for qualification in firearms training for active law enforcement officers, as determined by the former agency of the individual, the State in which the individual resides...

It should be noted the MPTC recently adopted a state standard for requalification that according to EOPS fulfills this requirement and should be used as the new qualification course for LEOSA.

Other changes to the eligibility requirements for "separated officers" include:

(5)(A) has not been officially found by a qualified medical professional employed by the agency

to be unqualified for reasons relating to mental health and as a result of this finding will not be

issued the photographic identification as described in subsection (d)(1); or

(B) has not entered into an agreement with the agency from which the individual is separating

from service in which that individual acknowledges he or she is not qualified under this section

for reasons relating to mental health and for those reasons will not receive or accept the

photographic identification as described in subsection (d)(1);;

The identification card section of the LEOSA has also been changed some-

what. As it applies to Massachusetts, it now states:

(2)(A) a photographic identification issued by the agency from which the individual separated from service as law enforcement officer and (B) a certification issued by the State in which the individual resides or by a certified firearms instructor that is qualified to conduct a firearms qualification test for active duty officers within that State that indicates that the individual has, not less than 1 year before the date the individual is carrying the concealed firearm, been tested or otherwise found by the State or a certified firearms instructor that is qualified to conduct a firearms qualification test for active duty officers within that State to have met— (1) the active duty standards for qualification in firearms training, as established by the State, to carry a firearm of the same type as the concealed firearm...

At the Gun Control Advisory Board meeting on Friday, EOPS stated that the new Massachusetts standardized law enforcement ID card will meet the requirements of the federal LEOSA law. The language on the back of the ID card for "separated officers" will include mention of both the federal law and the related state CMR. The current state CMR addressing this issue will be modified to incorporate the changes in federal law in the near future. It is likely that the current state certified LEOSA instructor process will remain, but the LEOSA course approval process may be eliminated in favor of utilizing the new state standardized MPTC qualification course.

Editors Note:

Current LEOSA instructors should take note that the ONLY course of fire that is now approved under the law is the MPTC Pistol Qualification Course which was adopted in 2010 as the state standard. MLEFIAA has adopted this course of fire as part of their LEOSA course LEO-002.



Belmont Police Department



Officer Safety Bulletin

Unclassified / Law Enforcement Only

HOLSTER SAFETY

At the conclusion of a recent training exercise, one of our officers holstered their weapon, inadvertently trapping the zipper pull from the side zipper of their winter coat inside the holster. The officer involved immediately notified the range instructor of the situation. Upon closer inspection, the range instructor determined that the lower half of the zipper pull had come to rest *inside the trigger guard, and forward of the trigger*. Had the officer involved simply pulled the jacket free, there is a substantial likelihood that the firearm would have discharged and struck the officer in the leg. Because both the officer and range instructor carefully evaluated the situation, they were able to avoid a potential tragedy.



It is especially important during the winter months that officers remain aware of their equipment and how quickly and easily accidents can happen. ***Stay safe!***

Firearm: Glock 23
Holster: Safariland Raptor 6270 Level II
Jacket: Blauer 3-in-1 style parka

Belmont Police Department . 460 Concord Avenue . Belmont, MA 02478
617-993-2500 . www.belmontpd.org

Unclassified / Law Enforcement Only

Unintentional Discharge Blamed on Flashlight

McClatchy-Tribune News Service
NBCDFW.com/November 20, 2010

The following article was submitted by a member. The next time someone suggests that officers do not need training on how to use lights, show them this.

A Plano narcotics sergeant intended to activate a flashlight affixed to his service weapon when he accidentally pulled the trigger, fatally shooting a drug suspect in a Far North Dallas parking lot last month, the officer told investigators.

"I never intended to fire my weapon," the sergeant said in a statement to Dallas police detectives following the Oct. 13 shooting of suspected drug dealer Michael Anthony Alcala, 25. "I never intended to have my finger on the trigger. I was only attempting to operate the flashlight mechanism."

The sergeant's written statement was among more than 200 pages of documents released to The Dallas Morning News in response to a Public Information Act request. The documents pertain to the Dallas police criminal investigation of the shooting.

A Collin County grand jury that was considering manslaughter charges took no action in the case against the sergeant earlier this month. The officer, who remains on administrative leave, is not being identified because he works undercover. Attorney Bob Gorsky is representing the Plano officer. "The incident is currently under administrative review by the Plano Police Department," Gorsky said in an e-mail. "We believe that upon completion of its investigation the police department will agree with the findings of the criminal investigation that this was an accidental discharge."

The sergeant specifically blamed the placement of a light switch under the trigger guard on his .40-caliber semi-automatic pistol. He said he had in the past carried a "Surefire brand X200 flashlight with pressure switches

on each side of the grip (*trigger guard?*) of the gun; however this summer the Plano Police Department issued me a Surefire brand X300 flashlight with the pressure switch under the trigger guard and no pressure switch on the grip."

"This was the only light I was allowed to have affixed to my weapon," the officer said. "I was attempting to squeeze the light mechanism when my weapon fired and the suspect fell to the ground."

A call to Surefire was not returned late Thursday. The company website describes it as having "the world's finest illumination tools and tactical products."

Officer Rick McDonald, a Plano police spokesman, said the department does not believe there is a problem with the flashlight in question or the way it is activated. "We have researched them thoroughly," McDonald said. "Right now, we are standing by these lights." The X300 flashlights will be issued to patrol officers soon, McDonald said. Plano officers in the narcotics, intelligence and canine divisions have been using the X200 model or other pistol lights for years.

The patrol officers won't be given the new lights until they go through training at the gun range. They won't be issued until next year, and the lights aren't mandatory, McDonald said.

McDonald said officers should attend training when they receive the new lights. It is unclear whether the officer in the shooting was put through any training when he received the new light.

The newer models have a brighter light and can illuminate a larger area. Most officers who use them leave them on the handguns all the time, McDonald said. "It doesn't take the place of a flashlight," he said. "You don't draw a weapon to use a flashlight." McDonald said that the department wasn't conducting an internal investigation into the "general use of flashlights."

On the night of the shooting, undercover Plano police narcotics officers had arranged to meet with Alcala to buy "cheese" heroin from him, according to police documents.

The undercover officers ultimately agreed to meet him at a Jack in the

Continued on the next page



Box parking lot along the Dallas North Tollway near Frankford Road, where they planned to arrest him.

Shortly before 11 p.m. Alcala, dressed in a red T-shirt, denim shorts and black and blue athletic shoes, walked toward an undercover officer's vehicle.

The officer who shot him said he drew his weapon as they moved in to arrest Alcala because he was believed to be a felony suspect and the officer was not sure whether he was armed.

"In an effort to illuminate the suspect, while maintaining an armed position, I intended to activate the

light on my pistol," the officer wrote. He fired once. Alcala fell to the ground.

"Did you shoot?" Someone asked, according to the officer. A chaotic scene then unfolded as the officers rushed to Alcala's aide, according to their statements. They applied pressure to the wound near his right collarbone and administered CPR.

"Stay with me," an officer said. Alcala "gasped one long breath and Dallas Fire Department medics arrived and took over," an officer wrote. "The suspect was never conscious by my observations and did not say anything." Alcala was de-

clared dead at Parkland Memorial Hospital at 11:34 p.m.

Editors Note: *This article left me shaking my head in amazement. If you proposed flashlight training to your Chief, you would probably be laughed out of the office...that is until one of your officers couldn't figure out the light switch from the trigger. The officer stated he never intended to fire his weapon. Why was his finger on the trigger? To add insult to injury - it was a Sergeant who did this.*

Holster Retention Standards (continued from Page 2)

weapon yet easy for the person wearing the holster.

Certain types of holsters should not receive a retention rating. Open top leather holsters are one such example. While these were very popular in the 50's and 60's as a fast draw option for plain clothes officers and FBI agents, they offer no retention and very little security. A physical activity at all can lead to a lost weapon.

Another design which is useless is the soft sided Cordura® holster. Popular among sportsman and recreational shooters, this holster has no place on the hip of a law enforcement officer. This holster normally has a thumb break retention strap but the soft side and oval top opening mean an assailant could grab the weapon while in the holster and slide their index finger in to access the trigger. Because the holster has very little rigidity, an assailant can bend it towards the officer's leg and press the trigger sending a round into the officer's leg.

Features which law enforcement duty holsters should have include: The body of the holster should be rigid to minimize lateral movement of the weapon when holstered. This may necessitate a laminate or polymer construction. It should not al-



DOES NOT =



low a finger to be inserted between the weapon and side of holster.

The trigger guard area should be covered preventing access to the trigger.

The user should be able to access the magazine release button to administratively remove a magazine without drawing the weapon.

Level I requires unlocking one retention device. Level II requires unlocking two retention devices and so on. Mechanical retention devices must be user friendly to operate and difficult to access from the front, side or rear.

If a lever or button unlocks more than one retention device, it only counts for one retention level.

A duty holster (i.e. one for exposed duty carry) must meet a minimum of Level I and is preferably Level II or III.

Law enforcement holsters must be impervious to blood borne pathogens and easily decontaminated.

A holster sold for law enforcement use must have at least one retention mechanism other than a friction fit.

Unfortunately there is no group of manufacturers which is willing to step up to the plate and assume this role. Safariland has come the closest however that standard only applies to their products. We can not rely on equipment retailers because by and large, their sole priority is maximizing their profit margin. Some take a sincere interest in selling only top quality products but most are just looking for the best margins. In the end it must be the end user who sets the standard and enforces it with their buying power.

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