

2009 FIREARMS INSTRUCTOR CONFERENCE ISSUE

# 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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### **Instructor Issues**

The following question was received by MLEFIAA from a member. The names and department have been removed. The material is included here with the permission of the submitter for the benefit of all.

I want to run something by you and get your opinion. My agency recently transitioned to the M&P in .40 with Streamlight TLR-1 lights for everybody. Everyone was given 4 hours of class room training followed by 12 hours of range time. About 700 rounds per officer were fired using this pistol/light/holster combo.

My K-9 Officer had a problem. He could not activate the TLR light with his support side hand because of his dog etc. Our training is that the trigger finger is never used to activate the light. The K-9 Officer was purchased a Surefire X-300 light with a pressure pad switch.

Last night during our night shoot we were doing a drill involving the use of the weapon lights. On the command "threat", the officers are to draw their weapons and illuminate the target. If the command "gun" or "knife" is given they are to shoot the appropriate number of rounds,

extinguish their lights and move laterally. If the command "cover the threat" is given, they are to illuminate the suspect and move laterally keeping the suspect illuminated but not fire. This is to get them used to the idea they will not always have to fire just because they have their weapon out. In August during our initial two day transition we did these drills during the day to get officers used to the controls etc their were no issues.

During the "cover the suspect" command, my K-9 fired a round. My officer immediately blamed it on the fact he had to squeeze the lights activation pad and he claims this is a problem and his finger curled into the trigger. I believe he had his finger off the trigger but in the trigger guard or on the trigger itself.

During the classroom the activation of the light etc. was gone over, power points were shown etc. Safety rules (keep your finger off the trigger) was pounded into them. Officers also had to sign a range rules safety sheet and even on this its states they will keep their fingers off the trigger, outside the trigger guard with the finger held alongside the weapons frame.

To make things more inter-

esting one of my other instructors told me he witnessed another officer have a round go off when it should not have. My instructor immediately went over and spoke to the shooter who confessed that he messed up and put his finger on the trigger when he should not have. The other instructor worked with him for a bit and re-stressed the rules of safe gun handling. The officer was watched the rest of the training with no further incidents. Both incidents were documented.

What do you think?

There is no question in my mind that <u>his finger was on the trigger.</u>

One of the biggest reasons we stress keeping your finger off the trigger is because when the body is stressed, certain physical reactions occur as a result of the adrenalin dump. One of these is for the body to "crouch" and for muscles to stiffen in anticipation of fight or flight. As the grip on the weapon increases, a finger on the trigger is likely to apply pressure on it — perhaps even to the point where the weapon will fire. This is also a problem when we are startled.

His weapon fired while he was COVERING the threat. There is only one way this can happen – he pressed the trigger which means his finger was on the trigger. This is a major violation of Rule 2 –

# Monthly Meeting

### Calendar

Oct 27, 2009 Westminster PD Develop 2010 Training Schedule

Nov 24, 2009 Sig-Sauer Acad. in Epping, NH

December 2009 No meeting -Merry Christmas

January 2010 Smith & Wesson Springfield, MA (elections)

February 2010 TBA

March 2010 TBA

April 2010 TBA

May 2010 Instructor Recert TBA

June 2010 Instructor Recert TBA

July & Aug 2010 No meeting -Summer Vacation

September 2010 Annual Training Conference

Watch your E-mail for last minute changes and details

### 2009 Conference Was A Huge Success!

Despite the poor economy and shrinking training budgets, almost 70 firearms instructors and armorers attended the annual Instructor Development Conference this year. As in the past, the Vendor Product Expo was held at the Devens Common Conference Center along with several classroom sessions throughout the day.

From Wednesday to Friday, the training moved to the range facilities of the Harvard Sportsman's Club. A total of 24 different training programs was offered during the week including a MPTC recertification, LEOSA Retiree Qualification and initial certifications in Tactical Flashlight Instructor and Specialty Impact Munitions.

The MLEFIAA Instructor Conference is truly an international event with instructors traveling to attend from as far away as Sweden. Many in attendance were repeat customers from previous years attesting to the quality of training received here and

the popularity of the event. The MLEFIAA conference is also the most cost effective multi-topic training in New England. Nowhere else can a law enforcement firearms instructor get their choice of two dozen training topics over four days for less than \$200. Similar programs at Gunsite, Thunder Ranch and the Chapman Academy cost about \$1000 for the week and that is before you pay for your lodging, meals and transpor-

tation. Even ILEETA and IALEFI can not match the quality of our training for the cost to the student. If you have not attended a MLEFIAA conference, you are missing out on a good deal and great training.

There will be a debrief at the October meeting and the conference committee will be discussing ideas for 2010. Please attend to find out more.



### **Product Review - SAFETY BULLET**

### Reviewed by Ed O'Leary

I received an unsolicited e-mail from Michael Worley / Safety Bullet, LLC recently, through the N.R.A. Firearms Instructors list. In the e-mail he describes the Safety Bullet as the fastest, easiest firearms safety device on the market today. I was intrigued, to say the least.

My background as a police lieutenant, 30 years on the job, firearms instructor / trainer for over twenty years, and armorer, coupled with my teaching Basic Firearms Safety to civilians seeking a License To Carry Firearms for ten years called out to me, directing me to look into this product.

Let me say at this point that in my civilian Basic Firearms Safety classes I have every student in the class apply and remove trigger locks. I display and demonstrate with cable locks as well as both keyed and combination trigger locks. To date every lock I have seen is of ques-

tionable quality. Cable locks can be easily cut with something as basic as a pair of snips – some even with good scissors. Or the lock can be smashed with a hammer. Keyed and combination locks can be pried off or smashed with a hammer – or a rock. And locking gun cases have locks similar to those on suitcases which are easily pried open. None of them provide more than a low level of protection against having the gun discharge when an unauthorized person gets hold of it.

Another problem I have noted it that firearms locked in this manner have very readily visible, overt security systems. My belief is that a more covert system, invisible to unauthorized individuals is far more effective.

So I contacted Mr. Worley. He told me he is the inventor and has patented the Safety Bullet as a result of a child getting killed in an accidental shooting in his area in Florida about ten years ago. He wanted to do something to prevent any more trage-

dies.

Mr. Worley told me about the product. It is built using a regular shell case and a standard primer. But there is no gun powder or bullet. Instead there is, in place of the bullet, a nylon-like white "expander" with an aluminum "ram" in the middle. Because the nylon-like expander is crimped into the shell case nothing comes out of the gun if the Safety Bullet is fired. It simply locks up the gun!

The Safety Bullet is loaded in the next to fire chamber in a revolver or in a semi-automatic pistol one is loaded into the chamber and one goes in as the next to fire in the magazine. What happens is this; if an unauthorized person pulls the trigger on a gun loaded with the Safety Bullet the firing pin hits the primer. The energy from the primer's ignition forces the "ram" into the "expander". In a semi -automatic pistol the "expander" opens up in the chamber and prevents the slide from being cycled. The gun is locked up so tightly even Popeye couldn't open it up! In a

### Safety Bullet Review (continued from previous page)



revolver things work a bit differently. The aluminum "ram" actually protruded from the "expander" about a half-inch and sits inside the barrel. This prevents the cylinder from turning OR opening. Once again the gun is locked up and temporarily inop-Importantly, everything is erable. either aluminum or the nylon-like material. Nothing can damage the gun. Now, how do you fix your gun if someone does fire it? You take the dowel that comes with each package and insert it into the barrel through the muzzle and simply push the "ram" back into the "expander" and everything clears.

The Safety Bullet currently is available in .38 special, .357 magnum, .44 magnum, 9 millimeter, .40 S&W, and .45 ACP. Coming soon is .380ACP along with many others.

Mr. Worley told me to look on his web site <a href="www.safetybullet.com">www.safetybullet.com</a> and watch a video demonstration and also watch the terrific animation of the operation of the Safety Bullet, and I did. It looked promising, but who knows?

Because I'm used to doing a T&E on

BEFORE

SHELL
CASING CRIMP DUPONT™ DELRIN®

PRIMER

AFTER

SAFETY BULLET Patent # US 6,698,126 82

all sorts of equipment before I buy I asked him to send me a couple to try out and he did! He sent me a package of two each in .40 S&W and .357 magnum. He also sent a DVD with the video and the animation.

When I received the package from Safety Bullet, LLC I was really excited. I brought everything to my office at the station, and I loaded a Safety Bullet into my Smith & Wesson model 681 .357 magnum revolver and another into my Glock model 22 .40 S&W pistol. Both of these are issued duty firearms and I am completely certain of their serviceable status. Using a clearing trap I fired both. Naturally there was almost no noise since there was nothing detonating except the primers. But what did I find out about the lock-up of the gun?

In the case of the Glock model 22 I found that I could not rack the slide for love or money. Now, I teach people how to cycle a slide that seems reluctant to move due to dirt or crud buildup, but this was like nothing I've seen before. I even tried to push the corner of the slide against the edge of a counter and it didn't budge. So I grabbed the dowel from the package, put it into the barrel through the muzzle, and pushed the "ram" back into the "expander". It freed the slide with no effect on the pistol whatsoever.

In the case of the Smith & Wesson model 681 I pressed the cylinder release forward but the cylinder only moved about a sixteenth of an inch before it stopped due to the aluminum "ram" sticking a half-inch into the barrel. I couldn't open the revolver. So I closed it up, grabbed the dowel and reset the "ram" and opened up the revolver. Inspection showed no effects.

A couple of days later a friend stopped by my house – a retired deputy sheriff and a firearms instructor. He had his Smith & Wesson M&P .40 S&W with him. He cleared his pistol, loaded up my last .40 S&W Safety Bullet, and guess what? His results were identical! **These** 

### things really work!

So now I have to go "real world". What's the big deal? Here it is. For those of us who may have a loaded pistol in the house not sporting a trigger lock from time to time, we can still secure the firearm from unintended discharges by using the Safety Bullet. But in the event you need the firearm, you just cycle the Safety Bullet(s) out and you are ready to fire in about one second. No fumbling with keys or combinations. Revert to training. Just TAP-RACK-READY. And we can all do that.

The Safety Bullet has an iron clad money back guarantee and is **RE-LOADABLE**. Simply send a used Safety Bullet back to Mr. Worley and for \$ 2.00 he reloads it and sends it back to you.

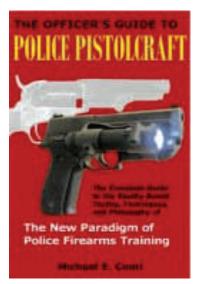
I give the Safety Bullet my absolute highest endorsement! I think it is the newest and best product available on the market today!

### **Editors Note:**

Ed O'Leary is the New England distributor for Safety Bullet. He is looking for dealers and can be reached at etol@comcast.net if you are interested. They are also available at Hunter's Trading Post in Weymouth.

To show how convoluted the firearms laws are, the Safety Bullet is constructed using a conventional cartridge case and pistol primer. Both these components are defined as "ammunition" under MGL c.140§ 121. As such it requires this product to be sold by a licensed ammunition dealer which Ed has covered. The federal government can not decide whether it is or not. The BATFE has issued a determination letter stating the Safety Bullet is NOT ammunition as defined under the Gun Control Act of 1968 (as amended) and falls in the same category as blank ammo. A copy of this letter is posted on Safety Bullet's web site. The Commerce Dept. says it is and must be shipped as ammo with a HazMat label. Go figure...

### New Book From Mike Conti - OFFICER'S GUIDE TO POLICE PISTOLCRAFT



In 2006, Police Pistolcraft - The Reality Based New Paradigm of Police Firearms Training was published by Saber Press. Author Michael E. Conti's work has become a primer for instructors favoring a combat based firearms training program. The Case Head reviewed Police Pistolcraft in the Fall 2006 edition where it was hailed as a "must read for serious firearms instructors". The New Paradigm is the basis for the firearms training given at the Mass. State Police Academy and several other agencies have adopted it entirely or in part. Police Pistolcraft was written for the instructor who was looking to upgrade their training program with techniques and material that was based on combat shooting situations - not shooting competition.

Mike Conti has a wealth of experience gained from years of researching the New Paradigm and building the Mass. State Police Firearms Training Unit. The foundation of the New Paradigm is the handgun shooting techniques developed by William Fairbairn and Eric Sykes in Shanghai before WWII. Shanghai was a wild place during those times. The streets were ruled by gangs and thugs with murder, rape and robbery being an everyday occurrence. Fairbairn and Sykes were determined to take back the city. The two developed highly effective armed and unarmed fighting

techniques which were based on real world encounters. Over the years they refined their techniques and returned to Britain at the beginning of WWII to train the Royal Commandos. In 1942 they wrote Shooting to Live which documented all their work. Around this time, a young OSS officer by the name of Rex Applegate became acquainted with their work and further refined these close quarter techniques while training agents scheduled to parachute behind enemy lines all over Europe. Applegate went on to write Kill or Get Killed. Both of these works have heavily influenced Conti's teachings because they are based on sound techniques developed in combat for combat situations

Much of our traditional firearms training is based on the "Modern Technique of Pistol Shooting" developed by the Southwest Combat Pistol League most notably Jeff Cooper, Ray Chapman, Jack Weaver, Thell Reed and Elden Carl. After using many of the techniques developed by Fairbairn, Sykes and Applegate, they began concentrating on obtaining a visual sight picture in these competitive events even at close range. Cooper was a prolific and dynamic writer which further promoted this method of shooting. As police firearms training evolved from bulls-eye type target shooting to a more realistic form of training, many trainers adopted the Modern Technique because it was perceived as a "combat shooting" method. In fact, it was really a rapid fire target shooting concept. This should not be interpreted as disrespect to Col. Cooper. The Modern Technique worked for what the users intended - winning combat pistol matches. It also served as a mechanism to pull us away from "target" style shooting for qualification.

Let's be very clear - the New Paradigm is not point shooting vs. aimed fire. Mike Conti is not naïve and understands that there are situations where a sight picture must be obtained for accurate fire. This is generally when the threat is further away

or we have the advantage of surprise. The New Paradigm takes the best of all worlds and rolls them into one program. Therein lays the advantage for the dedicated trainer seeking a realistic firearms training program.

The Officer's Guide to Police Pistolcraft is Mike Conti's follow on work to Police Pistolcraft. Because of the similarity in the titles, I will refer to this work as "The Officer's Guide" for simplicity. The Officer's Guide was designed and will serve as the student manual for the New Paradigm. Do not expect this book to be a simple rehash of Police Pistolcraft! This is a stand alone work oriented towards the street officer level user and has several new chapters of material. It has new material on handgun retention, edged weapon defense, understanding the reaction lag and police vs. the terrorist. There is also a very informative section on low light considerations, working in the dark and tactical flashlights. Officer's Guide introduces us to the concept of the "pistoleer". It is the dedicated law enforcement professional who does not relax their vigilance when going off duty. Anytime they leave the security of the home, they are armed and in condition Yellow. If you are reading this, you probably see one every morning when you look in the mirror.

This book also takes a look into the realm of the female shooter and the particular differences they will face. Rather than assuming he knows what works best for the female pistoleer, the author engaged the services of an experienced female trainer – Trooper Donna Losardo. Her resume is impressive and she writes with first hand experience about the obstacles female shooters will face with weapons and equipment. Since the majority of available information on this topic is oriented towards the male shooter, this will be an invaluable tool for the male trainer working with female shooters.

The Officer's Guide is full of solid training information, photos and diagrams. Since it is unlikely the stu-

### Is Current Firearms Qualification Obsolete?

### By Todd Bailey

For most police officers, law enforcement firearms training here in the Commonwealth begins at the academy level. Recruits are given a minimum of 40 hours including classroom and practical shooting at the range. Part time officers do not have a firearms component during their academy training at this time but that may change soon. In their case, training is done at the department level when they are hired and there is no standard or curriculum other than what the instructor or department training officer sets up. In both cases, the training is designed to take the officer from their current level of proficiency (usually novice) and make them competent to carry a weapon on the street in the line of duty. The officer's level of proficiency is tested with the MPTC 50 round Qualification Course. So far no problems.

As the new officer begins to acquire experience and additional training, their skill level begins to increase. While some officers never proceed any further than their academy firearms training, most will at least pick up some advanced training in their careers. The problem is the veteran officer is never held to a standard above that which they were held to at the academy. Can you imagine a surgeon never becoming more proficient than intern level? What about an airline pilot? Why then can a police officer get by with passing at a recruit

academy level every year? Should the minimum proficiency level for a 20 year veteran officer be the same as an officer who has been out of the academy for 20 minutes?

Firearms training should not stagnate after the academy but in many cases it does. While there is a strong push to improve this situation, many instructors and department training programs are stuck in a rut. The troops go to the range once a year and shoot the qualification course with each issued or authorized weapon. By the time each officer is run through the pistol, patrol rifle and shotgun courses of fire, the four hour training block is up. Little if any actual training is accomplished and if it does happen, it is just to fill in the time after shooting the qualification courses. Shrinking training budgets have not helped this situation. The end result is the average officer fires a minimal number of 'qualification' rounds annually and very few if any 'training' rounds. Also contributing to the problem is we have a variety of skill levels we need to teach around. Our training needs to address new officers with little or no experience to highly skilled officers who may be on the SWAT team.

Too much emphasis is placed on qualification merely to satisfy a bureaucrat's need to see a numeric score next to a name. In an effort to raise the bar, the state has improved the qualification course so that officers in agencies in this predicament get some kind of tactics and training. Kudos to the state however these stagnant agency programs need to be revamped.

Qualification should take place AFTER training. This is only logical because it is the mechanism used to document the officer's ability to perform the required skill sets. Unless we are evaluating the most basic level of proficiency, the evaluation is done after the training. Imagine if your child came home from school and told you the teacher gave the test before covering the material!

The instructor will have to evaluate the skill level of his officers and group them by skill level. Lumping your SWAT guys with the poor shooters demoralizes them and holds back the SWAT guys. Don't be afraid to put a shooter who shows interest and promise in with a higher level to challenge him (her).

This will make life a little more complicated for the firearms instructor and it will not be a popular idea with the bean counters because it is not the most fiscally efficient method to train/qualify officers. However, it is the most effective way to enhance the officer's skill level.

Raising the qualification program to higher levels will not happen tomorrow for many reasons but it should be in the back of every quality instructors mind.

### New Book From Mike Conti (continued from previous page)

dent officer will have read Police Pistolcraft, the author takes the reader through the concept of the New Paradigm and explains why this system is superior to the Modern Technique. I could not help but notice how the reader is treated with respect. Each aspect of the training program is explained in detail which gives the reader the feeling they are truly part of the training rather than just expected to listen and learn. As

I was reading the Officer's Guide, I could not help but think that this will be perfect for the officer who was looking for better firearms training but was unable to get it at their agency.

Even if you are a student of the Modern Technique, you will find useful information in this book. With just over 400 pages, the Officer's Guide to Police Pistolcraft is highly recommended and will be a well used

addition to every firearms instructor's reference library. If you have adopted the New Paradigm, this book should be standard issue for every student you have.

Buy it today from Saber Press (<u>www.sabergroup.com</u> or Email <u>booksales@sabergroup.com</u>) for \$40 which includes shipping and handling.





# M16/M4/AR15 ARMORER SCHOOL with GREG LEE & TacticaLogic





### Instructor Issues (continued from Page 2)

Finger OFF the trigger until on target and the decision to fire has been made. If his finger was straight out along the frame where it belonged, he would not have had an unintentional discharge.

If we take his excuse at face value, he is saying he has a coordination issue. He cannot squeeze his middle or ring finger to activate the light without also squeezing his index finger (which in this case was on the trigger). I think the problem is more likely that he needs some remedial training on basic weapon handling (i.e. keeping his finger off the trigger until it's time to shoot). Most veteran officers will deny this is a problem so I've found it useful to video the officer as they are put through some exercises which up the stress level. When they see themselves on video, it usually shuts them up.

It contradicts your training doctrine however there is an advantage to allowing the officer to use their trigger finger to activate the light. When their index finger is on the light button, it can't be on the trigger. If I may – I'd like to offer two suggestions: On your commands, think about using "threat" and "deadly threat" instead of 'gun' and 'cover'.

The command THREAT is used to alert the officer that there is a need to have their weapon out but not necessarily to shoot. The correct response from the officer would be to draw their weapon, illuminate the threat(s) and continue to scan for more. The response level is above where they are expected to use their hand held light to illuminate a suspect. The threat could be an edged weapon, club or a firearm but at this time, it is not a deadly force situation.

The command DEADLY THREAT is used to indicate the situation has gone down the toilet and the officer must use deadly force (fire his/her weapon). You have the option of going immediately to DEADLY THREAT or not going there at all. This follows directly in line with your current methodology where you have the officer recover to the holster without firing a shot.

The other suggestion is to have the officers use their lights as a distraction tool. If the situation warrants having their weapon out to cover a threat, aim the light in the threat's eyes. The brighter the light, the better this works. When a bright light is shined in

your eyes, the natural reaction is close your eyes, put your hand up to shield your eyes and/or turn your head away. All these reactions work to our favor by diverting the threat's attention away from the officer.

We naturally focus on the threat – in this case the weapon in the subject's hands. Watch your people and you will see the tendency is to illuminate the threat's weapon. When using photo realistic targets, it is common to see shot groupings around the weapon rather than in center mass. This reinforces this theory.

If we shift the light up to the eyes, we can still see the weapon but we can effectively blind (temporarily) the threat at the same time. This is the same concept we use with take down lights.

I'm pretty sure the issue is the shooter has some bad habits which need to be broken ASAP then some retraining. In any case, if he can't operate the weapon light without discharging the weapon, he's not safe.



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