



NRA LAW ENFORCEMENT QUARTERLY

WINNING THE GUNFIGHT

BY MARK SCHRAER

The majority of law enforcement officers with whom I speak still only receive firearms training an average of once or twice a year. For many, this training is little more than a qualification course that tests "basic shooting skills." These standards, both in frequency and effectiveness, should once and for all be seen as unacceptable in our profession. We are kidding ourselves, and risking the lives of our personnel, if we believe that a police officer who last trained in January is likely going to win a sudden and unexpected gunfight six to twelve months later!

The following are considerations that I believe should be used to create or improve a firearms training program that is designed to meet the needs of the officer as well as the agency.

Our First Training Priority – Close-Quarter Gunfighting

The FBI's annual Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted report (LEOKA) tells us that since 1980, almost 85% of murdered law enforcement officers have been killed less than seven yards from their assailants. More than half of these murdered officers were killed at distances from one to five feet!

This is only one side of the story. We do not have statistics on the number of fights that officers have won. However, while LEOKA statistics only tell half of the story, they are at least an indication that the most challenging gunfight; and therefore the ones off-



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cers should be preparing for the most, is the sudden close-quarter attack.

Rigorous Pistol Standards

We cannot debrief officers who have been murdered in gunfights. However, many officers who have won their fight have attributed their success to effective shooting standards which they either chose to develop or were forced to develop through their agency's training program.

However, as most of us are aware, not every officer holds themselves or is held to a standard mentioned above. For a variety of reasons – rank, assignment, lack of interest – many good officers remain woefully unprepared for a close-quarter gunfight. We do these officers and our agency a disservice if we allow any member of the department to remain poorly trained and under-prepared. Any gap between the skills required in training, versus those required to win a gunfight; exposes officers and their partners to even greater danger.

Teach before you test

Before establishing strict standards, officers should receive training on the specific skills required in a gunfight. Initial standards should be challenging, but we should not expect mastery. Eventually – in months, rather than years – every officer in your agency should be able to at least draw and fire three to four hits into the upper chest of the suspect in less than two seconds. This standard should require combat accuracy and in my opinion, lateral movement.

Combat Accuracy

Due to the limitations of the pistol, combat accuracy should once and for all replace

"center mass" as a training standard. Combat accuracy does not permit misses and records hits as only those shots that strike vital organs or the brain (or a hip socket in some cases). In order to increase the likelihood of success with the pistol, officers should be trained to make lighting-fast hits to those areas of the body that control heart-rate and breathing, rather than those areas that control blood sugar and digestion.

Combat Follow-Through

Make sure that officers are fast on the draw and slow to holster. Certainly we need to train officers to avoid tunnel vision, but only after they have assessed the known threat who just tried to kill them! Train officers to first track the threat to the ground, while moving somewhere else; and to assess the suspect's ability and willingness to continue the fight. Only then should they begin searching for potential threats elsewhere.

Closing Comments

There are a number of law enforcement agencies with excellent firearms training programs. However, it continues to be my experience, and the experience of instructors who I work with, that this is still the exception rather than the rule.

Law enforcement officers who train as infrequently as once or twice a year, or who see firearms training as little more than a set of skills they need to qualify on; are simply not prepared to meet the challenges of a sudden gunfight. As law enforcement firearms instructors, we need to do all that we can to make sure that firearms training is targeted to the specific threats officers actually face.



New Mexico State Police

On a visit to New Mexico, NRA Law Enforcement Division Director, Glen Hoyer, met with the recently appointed Chief of the New Mexico State Police, Robert Shilling. Chief Shilling, a career law enforcement officer, is also a strong supporter of his officers' involvement in competitive shooting. Chief Shilling took the time to pose with the numerous trophies his officers have won in competition and are on display at the state police headquarters.

"It is refreshing to see a top police official supporting his officers involvement in firearms competition," said Glen Hoyer. "Too many chiefs and sheriffs have forgotten the benefits of their officers competing. After all, competition is an extension of training, and if your officers are going to train on their own, it benefits everyone," he added.



FREE MATERIALS FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

Find out how your agency can share Eddie Eagle's life-saving message with the children in your community.

(800) 231-0752
www.nrahq.org/safety/eddie

A photograph of the Eddie Eagle mascot, a white duck with a red shirt that says "EDDIE", standing next to a police officer in a light blue uniform and a dark hat. They are outdoors, possibly at a public event, with a police car partially visible in the background.

Concerns of Police Survivors, Inc. provides resources to assist in the rebuilding of the lives of surviving families and affected co-workers of law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty as determined by Federal criteria. Furthermore, C.O.P.S. provides training to law enforcement agencies on survivor victimization issues and educates the public of the need to support the law enforcement profession and its survivors.

Camps, get-aways and retreats for surviving spouses, children, teenagers and young adults, siblings, parents, in-laws and, new in 2010, the Affected Co-Workers Retreat are examples of the C.O.P.S. "hands on" programs held yearly to address the emotional needs of each group of survivors. At each gathering, it is the combination of the trained mental health professionals and peer support from survivors further along in their grief process that bring about the healing process for the survivors who attend.

2010 was a particularly deadly year for the law enforcement community with a 37% increase in line of duty deaths from the previous year. Unfortunately, as of early July, 93 law enforcement officers have lost their lives in the line of duty (Cosgriff, ODMP). This dramatic rise in line of duty deaths reflects directly on the increased numbers of survivors coming to C.O.P.S. for the programs and emotional support so needed for their healing journey. C.O.P.S. does not charge survivors for any program or service that it provides; survivors have already paid too high a price.

C.O.P.S. looks to the law enforcement community and private sector to help us make that statement. If you or your agency or organization would like to help C.O.P.S. continue its healing mission, please visit the C.O.P.S. website at www.nationalcops.org or call the national office at (573) 346-4911 for more information.

New Security Firearm Instructor Regulations Passed in Florida

On Friday, July 1, 2011, Florida's new licensing requirements for Private Security Firearm Instructors, otherwise known as the "K" license, became effective.

There were three parts of the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) regulations that were amended. First, documentation of current "Certification" as an NRA "Private Security Firearm Instructor" will now be required at the time of your application. Simply providing a "Course Completion" certificate will no longer be sufficient.

Second, FDACS has changed their "Renewal" period for your "K" license from every two years to every three years. They are just extending the renewal period by one year. The cost to renew your "K" license hasn't changed.

Lastly, FDACS is now requiring its Private Security Firearm Instructors to maintain this "Certification" in order to renew their "K" license. As of July 1, 2011, when you go to "renew" your "K" license with FDACS, you will be required to provide documentation of your continued "CERTIFIED" status as an NRA "Private Security Firearm Instructor."

The NRA's Law Enforcement Division was made aware of these changes and already has procedures in place to assist you with your future and/or continued compliance with FDACS new regulations. Please visit our website at www.nrahq.org/law for the answers to ALL of your questions concerning Florida's new "K" License requirements.

NRA MEMBERSHIP DISCOUNT FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT

Did you know that NRA offers a membership discount to law enforcement officers?

Aside from the discount, here are some of the benefits of membership:

If you are a public law enforcement officer who is a current paid member of the NRA and are killed in the line of duty, the widow or survivors are eligible for a \$25,000 line of duty death benefit.

NRA Certified Law Enforcement Firearm Instructors have available to them, through NRA Endorsed Insurance, a General and Professional Liability policy from \$150 for \$250,000/\$500,000 in coverage to a \$300 premium for \$1,000,000/\$2,000,000

coverage. Coverage for Private Law Enforcement Instructors is also available.

Retired and active-duty law enforcement officers can now carry a concealed firearm for protection nationwide. NRA Endorsed Insurance is able to offer Off-duty and Retired Officer Self-defense Insurance. The coverage is very reasonable starting at \$50 for a \$25,000 policy and going up to a \$205 premium for \$250,000 in coverage.

If you wish to obtain the NRA's Law Enforcement membership discount please contact us at LE@nrahq.org and put "Membership Discount" in the subject block.

NRA Law Enforcement Division's New Badge

The NRA Law Enforcement Division has announced the release of a new law enforcement badge.

The new badge is similar to the very popular 50th Anniversary badge that was released last year to commemorate the division's history. "We had many requests to make available a non-anniversary edition of the NRA Law Enforcement Division badge," said Glen Hoyer, the Division Director.

Smith & Warren makes this beautifully handcrafted badge which is die-struck from solid brass, cloisonné enameled, highly polished and then coated with a pure 24 karat gold electroplate. Each badge comes with a heavy-duty pin and safety catch attachment on its rear, and is mounted in a black velvet display box featuring the official NRA logo.

The new badge is available through our Program Materials Center website (<http://materials.nrahq.org>) for \$69.95, plus shipping & handling and sales tax where required.

For a limited time, we will make available a custom badge to those

who wish to have a badge number (up to four digits) of their choice on the badge. The custom-numbered badges will only be available through the Law Enforcement Division by contacting Patrick Gullivan at pgallivan@nrahq.org for an order form. The custom-numbered badges will be \$79.95 plus tax and shipping and will take 8-10 weeks for delivery, as they are made to order.

"The custom-numbered badges are great for a promotion or retirement gift, as well as for those who collect badges and like particular numbers," added Hoyer.



2011 NRA NATIONAL POLICE SHOOTING CHAMPIONSHIPS

Shooting Range Park, Albuquerque, New Mexico
September 18-22, 2011



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TACTICAL POLICE COMPETITION

The NRA Law Enforcement Division created the Tactical Police Competition (TPC) program to encourage patrol officers to gain more experience, training and time on the range using their duty firearms. While traditional standard qualification courses of fire are very important, we believe officers need additional practice time, live fire exercises, and challenges to hone their skills and gain additional experience in handling and deploying duty firearms.

TPC matches are comprised of four to seven separate courses of fire. Courses may be handgun-only, rifle or shotgun-only, or a combination of firearms. Each course is designed to challenge the officer's skills in the use of their duty firearms and equipment. Some of the challenges include: assessing threat and non-threat targets; firing from unusual shooting positions; making tactical decisions of how to move through a course; using cover and working around visual barriers; being responsible for ammunition management; assessing hits; and balancing the paramount need for accuracy with speed.

Diagnosing and Coaching the Shooter

BY ARNIE STALLMAN

A good firearms instructor must also be a good coach. It is not sufficient to simply impart information from the front of the classroom or the range. If you want to be an effective coach, you must listen to the shooter as well as observe their performance. The communication should be two-way. Your analysis may be confirmed by what they say, or it may take you in another direction.

What do we watch when the shooter is using a semi-automatic pistol?

We watch the shooter. One of my favorite instructors says, "You can't tell which way the train went by looking at the tracks." We read the shooters, trigger finger, thumbs, fingers, thumbnails, forearms, shoulders, face and eyes. We observe during both live and dry-fire and especially during ball and dummy drills.

What are we looking for? **We watch the face to see if the head moves from side to side because the shooter can't decide which eye to use.** Does the head move down to the gun during the draw or does the gun come up to the line of sight? We note the eye used and if the shooter is cross dominant. Is the shooter turning the head to bring the dominant eye behind the gun? Does the eye dominant close prior to the shot? Does the face display stress just prior to the shot? Is the top of the gun, level with the shooter's eye? If the gun is not level, the shooter is not seeing sight alignment, but rather just the front sight on the target.

We watch the thumbs. They should lie there, but they should have no power. If the thumbs are pushing against the gun, are they making hard contact with the slide or operating levers? Are they touching the slide stop, or getting in the way of the trigger finger? Another clue on the thumbs is taking note of the color of the thumbnail, when pressing it changes color. Check the thumbs by pulling outward on the tip of the thumb; if they are rigid and tight, they are pushing on the gun.

We watch the forearms and the shoulders. Observe your own forearm as

you make a tight fist and then relax it, and tighten again. Notice all the muscles that move during the process. Now make a firm fist and extend your trigger finger and slowly and smoothly bend and straighten your trigger finger. The forearm muscles barely move. The shooter must understand that you want them to isolate the trigger finger and use it independently from the rest of the muscles of the hand. The shoulders should not shrug, which is to say the shoulders should not rise up and try to touch the ears. It is unnecessary muscle movement and it is not comfortable for the shooter.

We watch the follow through. Watch the muzzle of the weapon after it fires. If follow through is being employed the muzzle will rise slightly and return instantly to the line of sight. If instead the muzzle moves slowly upward 1½ to 3 inches, pauses there, and then slowly it moves down to the line of sight, that shooter has no follow through. This lack of follow through will also exhibit itself by the support hand disengaging from the gun. The fingertips of the support hand will lose contact with the right hand. They will have to re-establish the grip in between shots. Most instructors will say that the grip is not strong enough, and the shooter should tighten up their grip. But what is happening, most of the time, is that the shooter is relaxing their grip simultaneous with the firing of the pistol. They have no follow through.

The best definition for follow through that I've ever heard is "continuing to do for a moment after the shot, the same thing you were doing before the shot." In other words, don't quit your job simultaneous with the firing of the gun.

The coach, who wants to see the student succeed, needs to (1) recognize what the shooter is doing wrong and (2) understand the reason behind it, and (3) have the ability to make the shooter understand number 1 and number 2.

Absent from our observations is the manipulation of the trigger. It is a huge area and will be addressed in future articles.



Arnie Stallman is a retired police officer from Phoenix, Arizona with over 34 years of law enforcement experience. He has been an NRA firearms instructor since 1979. He spent 12 years assigned to the Firearms Training Unit at the Phoenix Academy, which also functions as the State Academy. He currently donates his time as an instructor at the Academy as a Reserve Officer and serves as an adjunct instructor for the Law Enforcement Division of the NRA.

Retired & Off-Duty Officer Self-Defense Insurance

The NRA Endorsed Insurance Program is proud to recognize the sacrifices made by law enforcement officers. To show their appreciation, the program is offering a discounted self-defense coverage for retired law enforcement officers and off-duty police officers who are NRA members.

The coverage starts at only \$50 annually and is designed to affordably protect retired and off-duty officers. With limits up to \$250,000, officers can receive coverage for criminal and civil defense costs, the cost of civil suit defense, and criminal defense reimbursement.

Purchasing this coverage is easy! Simply visit www.lawenforcementselfdefense.com and select the option to purchase coverage on the right. For more information or to speak directly to a representative call the NRA Endorsed Insurance Program toll-free at 877-672-3006.



Program Administered by
Lockton Risk Services

2011 NRA Law Enforcement Firearm Instructor Development Schools

www.nrahq.org/law/training • lead@nrahq.org • (703) 267-1640

New schools are added often. Check website frequently for current Training Schedule.

Range fee, if any, is payable to some hosting agencies; amount varies.

NRA Tuition = \$525 per person

HANDGUN & SHOTGUN

Aug 29-Sep 2 Manchester, NJ
 Sep 12-16 Cottonport, LA
 Sep 12-16 Manchester, CT
 Sep 12-16 Cottonport, LA
 Sep 19-23 Bethlehem, PA
 Oct 3-7 Ford City, PA (west)
 Oct 3-7 Las Vegas, NV (public LE only)
 Oct 10-14 Charleston, SC
 Oct 17-21 Defiance, MO (public LE only)
 Oct 17-21 Pearl, MS
 Oct 17-21 Southampton, NY
 Oct 24-28 Abilene, TX
 Nov 14-18 Florence, AL
 Mar 19-23 '12 Baton Rouge, LA
 Apr 2-6 '12 Florence, AL
 May 21-25 '12 Shreveport, LA
 Oct 29-Nov 2 '12 Florence, AL

HANDGUN

Sep 12-16 Stanton, MI
 Oct 24-28 Lusby, MD
 Oct 15-19 '12 Lusby, MD
 Oct 29-Nov 2 '12 Palm Beach, FL

PATROL RIFLE

Aug 22-26 Trinidad, CO
 Aug 29-Sep 2 Coden AL
 Sep 12-16 Canon City, CO
 Sep 19-23 Fort Sam Houston, TX
 Sep 19-23 Goddard, KS
 Sep 19-23 LaPorte, MN
 Sep 26-30 Ontario, Calif.
 Sep 26-30 Memphis, TN
 Oct 10-14 Abilene, TX
 Oct 10-14 Ford City, PA (west)
 Oct 24-28 Florence, AL
 Oct 31-Nov 4 Lusby, MD
 Oct 31-Nov 4 North Chicago, IL
 Oct 31-Nov 4 Palm Beach, FL
 Oct 31-Nov 4 Reno, NV
 Nov 7-11 Pittsburgh, PA (west)
 Nov 14-18 Fort Supply, OK
 Nov 14-18 Pearl, MS
 Nov 14-18 Southampton, NY
 Feb 27-Mar 2 '12 Florence AL
 Mar 12-16 '12 Largo, FL
 Sep 24-28 '12 Florence, AL
 Oct 22-26 '12 Lusby, MD

PRECISION RIFLE

Aug 22-26 Coden, AL
 Aug 22-26 Maryville, TN
 Sep 19-23 Amarillo, TX
 Oct 31-Nov 4 Las Vegas, NV (public LE only)
 Jan 30-Feb 3 '12 Palm Beach, FL
 Mar 26-30 '12 Abilene, TX
 Apr 16-20 '12 Florence, AL
 Sep 10-14 '12 Shreveport, LA

SELECT-FIRE

Oct 3-7 Littleton, CO (public LE only)
 Oct 10-14 Epping, NH
 Oct 17-21 Florence, AL
 Nov 7-11 Lakeland, FL
 Nov 28-Dec 2 Las Vegas, NV (public LE only)
 Apr 30-May 4 '12 Palm Beach, FL

TACTICAL SHOOTING

Aug 22-26 Littleton, CO (public LE only)
 Sep 12-16 Smithton, PA (west)
 Oct 10-14 Covington, TN
 Oct 17-21 Lansing, KS
 Oct 17-21 Las Vegas, NV (public LE only)
 Nov 7-11 Charleston, SC
 Nov 7-11 Florence, AL
 Mar 19-23 '12 Florence, AL
 Apr 16-20 '12 Abilene, TX
 Jul 30-Aug 3 '12 Palm Beach, FL
 Oct 15-19 '12 Florence, AL

TACTICAL SHOTGUN

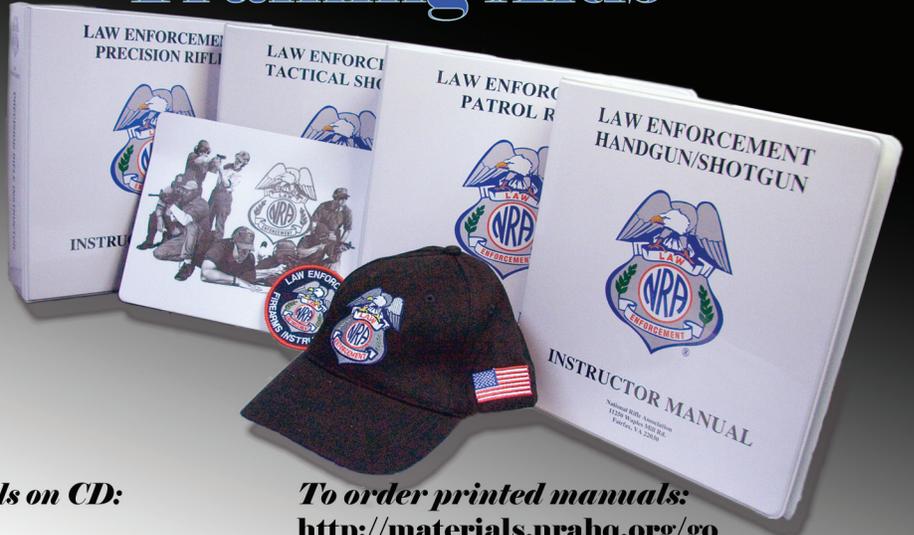
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 Sep 26-30 Bethlehem, PA
 May 21-25 '12 Baton Rouge, LA

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To order training aids and materials on CD:
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To order printed manuals:
<http://materials.nrahq.org/go>



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Sales of these items are restricted to NRA Certified Instructors, sworn Law Enforcement Officers, bona fide Law enforcement agencies, armed security companies, and the U.S. military. Once your order is received, you may be contacted by a member of the Law Enforcement Activities Division to verify eligibility.

Scan this code with your smartphone or tablet to get more information about the NRA Law Enforcement Division.



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