

# P&SN

Police  
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News

Serving Law Enforcement & Homeland Security

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2020  
VOLUME 36 ISSUE 1

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## Police and Security News

Serving Law Enforcement & Homeland Security

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# ...AND NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH

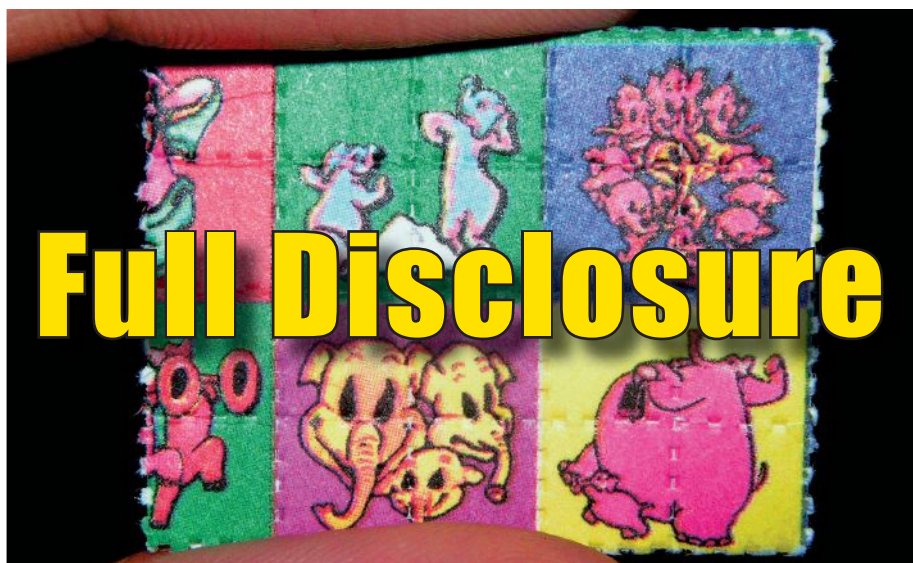
**Ramesh Nyberg**

Okay, this is *almost* full disclosure.

A couple of years ago, a close family member confided in me that they had taken LSD at some point in their young life. A year later, a second family member admitted the same thing. I was flabbergasted. LSD? The stuff which made Art Linkletter's daughter jump out of a window because she was convinced she could fly? That stuff?

No, I was told, this is not – in essence – *your father's LSD*. In truth, I was told, the stuff had become so refined, so engineered, that there weren't those "bad trips" and that kind of stuff happening anymore. What could I say? These people – people whom I love – were smiling and telling me that it was okay and that I had nothing to worry about.

What used to be called illicit drug use by my generation is considered by the newer generations as an accepted standard.



Whether we like it or not, more and more states are acquiescing to the idea that they cannot stop illegal drug use – at least, where marijuana is concerned – and have legalized it on either a medical or recreational scale. It appears as though the generations with which we have endowed with our "torch" are embracing the idea that narcotics use has a place and that we shouldn't stress it so much. They're using the torch to light up. The "war on drugs" has entered into a peace treaty. Nancy Reagan's "just say no" has become, "just say 'whatever.'"

Part of this could be attributed to the proliferation of "designer" or "homemade" drugs. The standards we could always identify – cocaine, heroin, weed, amphetamines, downers, and LSD – have been crowded out by so many new players in the field of mind-altering substances that they are almost an afterthought, though they are still pretty popular. The various opiates, psilocybin (the mushroom derivative), meth, and other lab creations which people have cooked up with ingredients you can get at The Home Depot®, have become so varied that our nation's statute books are having trouble keeping up with what's legal and what isn't. Heck, here in Florida, the attorney general put out a bulletin a few years ago that the most widely abused drugs by young people are prescription drugs which the kids are getting from mom and dad's medicine cabinets.

But, none of this quest for a buzz is anything new. In the book, *Stealing Fire*, authors Steven Kotler and Jamie Wheal point to 415 BC Greece and a sacred elixir called "kykeon" which apparently had some pretty wild effects on Athenian partygoers. The Greek historian Plutarch wrote that, in less than an hour of drinking the stuff, the user experiences sweats and terrors, but soon after passes into "delightful meadows" and is "impressed with celestial visions."

Kotler and Wheal go on to say that mankind has always pursued the ultimate buzz. Whether it's for celestial visions or for peak performance, it has not been beyond the reach of CEOs, athletes and even soldiers to use enhancing substances to achieve superiority in the boardroom, the arena or the battlefield. There has long been proof that, in WWII, both the Germans and the Japanese used early versions of methamphetamine to move faster, fight without rest and maintain a feeling of invincibility.

Alcohol has been a mainstay in almost all cultures since written history. It's talked about in the Bible countless times and especially in the story of the wedding when

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## ...AND NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH

Continued from page 6

water was changed into wine. Native Americans have been using peyote way before the Europeans arrived on the continent. It doesn't appear that there was ever an "innocent time" in our history when we humans didn't want to party hardy. Remember the scene in the presumably innocent movie, *The Wizard of Oz*, when the wicked witch puts Dorothy and her buddies to sleep? What does she use? Poppies, the opium plant! And, what does the good witch use to wake them up? *Snow!* They couldn't say it outright, but the creators of that movie sure wanted to let us know how cool Hollywood was in the 1930s and that heroin and cocaine were alive and well at elite gatherings. And, speaking of the 1930s, how long did Prohibition last?

So, what does all of this mean for us in law enforcement? It's really not enforcement that's a problem: You catch someone with cocaine, you make an arrest. The courts do whatever they do and that's that. What is really the challenge – and has *always been* the challenge – is the encounter itself. The real danger of drugs for us is dealing with the drugged up person: Having to handle someone on meth or coke presents an extremely dangerous and unpredictable scenario. If you've been in uniform any length of time, you might have had to fight or

struggle with someone who was coked up or on meth – it's not fun. They don't feel pain and they seem to have endless stamina. It wasn't uncommon in the "freebase" days of the '80s for us to need an entire squad to arrest one 5' 9" guy who was flipping out. Then, they died of "cocaine psychosis" (which is really just a heart attack from an overwhelming amount of adrenalin overworking the cardio system) and it looked like some horrible police brutality incident. It happened many times in those days.

The legality or illegality of drugs really doesn't matter: It's quite clear that people are going to use them anyway. Our constant concern is being prepared to deal with the erratic, often violent, behavior.

I'm writing this on December 7th, 78 years after the skies of Pearl Harbor were filled with meth-stoked Japanese pilots, bombing the crap out of our Navy, and being so juiced up they didn't care if they died or not. Yesterday, here in south Florida, two robbers hijacked a UPS truck with the driver in it, taking him hostage. A wild chase ensued and police officers from several agencies ended up in a chaotic gun battle with the robbers in the next county. None of our brothers or sisters in blue were hurt. Both robbers were killed, but so was the hostage and

an innocent man in an adjacent car who happened to get caught in the crossfire. As you can imagine, the news and social media is all abuzz with criticisms and second-guessing how the police should have done this and that. We don't know yet, until the autopsies on the bad guys are done, whether drugs were in their system, but it wouldn't come as a great surprise if there were.

I'm working a case right now (I still do the PI stuff from time to time) to help a family and their lawyer determine if their son killed himself in a suicide, or whether he was killed by two guys who were with him. One thing we do know from the tox report: He had six different narcotics in him, including cocaine and morphine.

The legal battles about drugs will always be fought in the civilian arena, but the battles you and your colleagues will always be faced with on the street are battles civilians will never truly understand. **P&SN**

*Ramesh Nyberg retired from law enforcement in November 2006 after 27 years in police work. He now owns his own private investigation agency, Nyberg Security and Investigations, and can be reached at [Ramesh@NybergPi.com](mailto:Ramesh@NybergPi.com). He enjoys getting feedback from readers.*



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# FOCUS ON TECHNOLOGY

## New High-performance Duty Holster

The **Rapid Force Duty Holster** by Alien Gear Holsters has been designed to exceed law enforcement standards in durability, speed, security, and ergonomic usability. Incorporating extensive feedback from numerous police personnel, this new duty holster addresses all of the shortcomings of other holsters currently being utilized.

The **Rapid Force** has been designed for an intuitive draw stroke, utilizing gross motor control with as few movements as possible. The result is a reliably smooth and consistent draw.

This high-performance holster strikes the perfect balance between retention levels and ease of use. While easy to operate, it is almost impossible for culprits to perform a gun grab while its retention devices are engaged.

The **Rapid Force** is configurable as a Level II or Level III retention holster, with a thumb release, trigger guard pressure release, and an optional back strap and RMR sight cover attachments. Adjustable passive retention is also standard, to ensure continuous firearms safety.

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## New GLOCK® 44 – Chambered in .22 LR

GLOCK recently debuted its .22 LR caliber pistol, the **GLOCK 44**. The **G44** has a hybrid steel polymer slide and mirrors the GLOCK 19 frame size. It features many of the enhancements seen in the 5th Generation of GLOCK pistols, such as the ambidextrous slide stop lever and reversible magazine catch; the GLOCK Marksman Barrel (GMB) for increased accuracy and performance; adjustable back straps; and adjustable rear sights. The **G44** also features a ghost hole loaded chamber indicator and comes standard with two ten-round load assist magazines.

**Circle 1008 for More Information**

## Firearms, Ammunition and Accessories

### M&P® Shield™ EZ® Pistol Series in 9mm

Smith & Wesson® recently announced the new **M&P9 Shield EZ** chambered in 9mm caliber. The **M&P9 Shield EZ** features an easy-to-rack slide, easy-to-load magazine, and easy-to-clean design.

The **M&P9 Shield EZ** features an 8+1 round capacity and a 3.675" barrel. It ships with two eight-round magazines which feature a load assist tab for quick, easy loading, as well as a picatinny-style equipment rail to accommodate accessories. The pistol also features an optimal M&P pistol 18 degree grip angle for a natural point of aim; white dot front and adjustable white dot rear sights; and a light, crisp trigger.

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### New High Capacity Leader

Springfield Armory® has recently introduced the new **9mm Hellcat™**. Featuring a capacity of 11+1 and 13+1 with included extended magazine, it has been designed specifically for everyday carry with Adaptive Grip Texture™.



The Hellcat is also offered in an OSP™ (Optical Sight Pistol) configuration with a milled slide to accept the smallest, most popular micro red dots on the market.

It comes with two magazines, a patented 11-round mag with pinky extension and a 13-round extended mag. A flush plate is also included to give the pistol as small of a footprint as possible.

The **Hellcat** features a high visibility tritium and luminescent front sight paired with a Tactical Rack U-Dot™ rear sight for easy target acquisition in all lighting conditions. This new pistol measures four inches in height; six inches in length; and one inch in width.

**Circle 1010 for More Information**

### New Rail Mounted Weapon Light

Streamlight® has introduced the **TLR-7® A** with rear switches featuring a low or high position to suit user preference. The lightweight and compact new light delivers 500 lumens for a variety of tactical uses.

The **TLR-7 A** features a power LED which delivers 5,000 candela and 500 lumens over a beam distance of 140 meters. It offers two lighting modes – LED only or LED strobe – each with a runtime of 1.5 hours. The light is energized by a single three volt CR2 lithium battery.

Securely fitting to a broad range of weapons, the new **TLR-7 A** features a one-handed, snap on and tighten interface which keeps hands away from gun muzzles when attaching or detaching them. The light also includes a Safe Off feature, locking it so it cannot be turned on accidentally.

The **TLR-7 A** weighs 2.40 ounces and measures 2.58 inches in length.

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# THE WHEELS OF JUSTICE

# WORKING IN A Winter Wonderland

Sergeant James Post



I grew up and ultimately spent my 25 year career in the Midwest, actually about 250 miles from the geographical center of the contiguous United States. Love it or hate it, the Midwest is one of those places in our great country which experiences the full four seasons – that’s the plus. The minus is that, if you are working outside in those four seasons in the Midwest, you can expect temperatures from zero (and lower) in the winter to 110 (and over) in the summer and experience things like “wind chill” and “heat indexes” which some parts of America don’t.

Of course, it’s not just our fellow humans who experience – and must be prepared for – the four seasons; it’s our vehicles, too, which leads us to this issue’s column. Before 2019 even made it to December, there were several major blizzards (from the West Coast to the East Coast) with drifts over two feet high; sub-freezing temperatures; and, of course, the requisite freeway pileups. And, much of this was in areas not accustomed to winters like I grew up with, and worked in, or coping with them.

## Preparing and Protecting Your Fleet for Winter

When I began working the mean streets, my department only had two engine choices (six or eight cylinders) and only one gearing option (rear-wheel drive). Nowadays, fleet managers have numerous engine choices and drive options which look like answers to a multiple choice question: RWD, FWD, AWD, or 4WD. But, which is best for winter driving? The simple answer is the same as you’ll see in the tire section of this column which follows...it all depends on the amount of snow you expect this (or any) winter.

Here’s a good rule: If you expect over 300 days of sunshine and mostly dry streets, go with the RWD and, what the heck, buy the V-8, too! For rare to occasional mild snows of a couple of inches, FWD is your best bet because it will get you through most common winter conditions. The engine sitting on top of your front wheels will also give you additional traction, if needed. If you work in an area where winter is an actual season and you might get snows of six or more inches,

AWD is the best fit. An AWD vehicle will automatically shift traction to wherever it is needed – front or rear.

If you expect extreme snow, blizzards and drifts, your best bet would be 4WD, but that’s only an option for pickups and some SUVs. Most 4WD normally operates with the rear wheels and has two separate axles which allow drivers to engage 4WD and “locks” the front and rear wheels together. Some 4WD systems have a mode which automatically engages all four wheels if slippery conditions are detected. Most 4WD systems have “high” or “low” ranges, in both 2WD and 4WD. High range (in 2WD) is for normal driving, whereas low range is for when the going gets tough, like plowing through snowdrifts or when you are stuck. Low range 4WD should never be used for normal driving as the locking front wheels will plow straight ahead through turns.

Most city departments can’t justify 4WD vehicles year-round, so AWD is the best choice, but you might have to get by with aggressive snow tires on all four corners or chains when it really gets bad. Your engine in the front will help traction on



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## THE WHEELS OF JUSTICE

Continued from page 12

the front and you might consider additional weight (beyond what you normally carry) in the rear of sedans and SUVs for more traction.

### The Rubber Meets the Road

The greatest single factor affecting winter driving is your tires and you have many choices here, too, based on your area and forecast. But, buying the correct type of tires can be confusing because names and descriptions over the years have sometimes become interchangeable. Here are some common categories of tires: touring; performance; all-season; winter, mud and snow; and all-terrain. Most police sedan and SUV tires fall under "performance" because of their high-speed rating of "V" (149 mph), and are considered "summer" tires because they are unsuitable under 45 degrees. Touring tires come on most passenger cars. An all-season rating may be seen on touring and performance tires. All-season means they are approved for dry and wet pavement and light snow, but, below seven degrees, they can harden and lose their traction. All-terrain tires are for vehi-

cles which are used on- and off-road and are superior in mountain and severe winter regions.

Winter tires often are called snow tires or mud and snow tires. Mud and snow tires will be marked "M/S" or "M&S," but true winter-rated tires will have three mountain peaks stamped into the tire sidewall, indicating that the tire meets the definition of a true winter tire and has passed a US requirement which sets a minimum traction standard in snow. Compare that to an all-season rating which has a very low labeling standard and will not necessarily improve winter traction. The best winter tires will provide a good grip in all cold weather conditions – whether the road is wet or dry.

Proper tire selection can be more confusing than which coffee to order at Starbucks®. Whichever style you choose, remember to not mix tread styles – all of the experts say to put the same tires on all four corners. I'll take that a step further and recommend that all four be the same brand. That can be an expensive proposition when preparing for winter, but it is all

about safety.

Goodyear®'s LE division has made those choices easier for you with their Enforcer Family of three LE tires. The Eagle Enforcer is their standard duty tire. The Eagle Enforcer All Weather is pursuit ready with winter tread compound zones for enhanced grip, while the Eagle Enforcer Winter tire is for even harsher environments. Other tire manufacturers likely have matching tires with varying degrees of applications as well.

Most police agencies don't have an issue with replacing tires due to age, but it is possible that seldom used vehicles might have tires too old to be safe, or they may have been stored in your garage for some time. Determining your tire's age is easier than determining a blind date's age. Since 2000, the NTSA has required the date of manufacture to be posted on the tire sidewall. It will read "DOT" followed by 12-13 letters and numbers, but you only need to note the last four numbers which will indicate the week and year the tire was manufactured. For example, if the last four are "2218" the tire was manufactured the 22nd

A large graphic celebrating TSSI's 40th anniversary. The background is a dark world map with red dotted lines connecting various locations. In the center, the text "TSSI" is written in large, bold, white letters. To the right of "TSSI" is a red square logo featuring a white silhouette of a person jumping, with "EST. 1980" written in white below it. To the right of the logo is a gold circular seal with a serrated edge. Inside the seal, the text "TEAMWORK • INTEGRITY" is at the top, "40 YEARS" is in the center, and "RELIABILITY • EXCELLENCE" is at the bottom. Below the seal, the text "CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF SERVICE" is written in large, bold, red letters. At the bottom left, the website "WWW.TSSI-OPS.COM" and email "SALES@TSSI-OPS.COM | (877) 535-TSSI (8774)" are listed in red. At the bottom right, there are four circular social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube.

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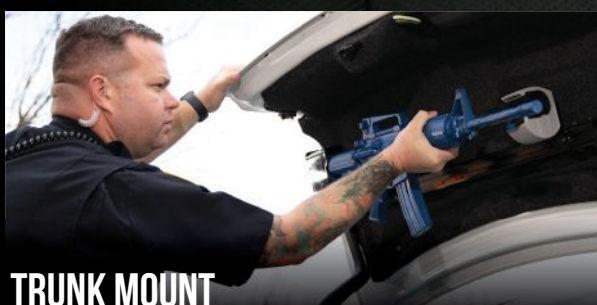
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## THE WHEELS OF JUSTICE

Continued from page 14

week of 2018. Tires should never be used ten years beyond their build date.

In addition to tread depth, monitoring your vehicle's tire pressure is an important winter consideration because tire pressure drops one to two pounds for every ten degrees the temperature drops. Fortunately, most contemporary vehicles with TPMS air pressure sensors mounted in each wheel constantly send air pressure readings to your instrumentation. Experts recommend that you raise (overinflate) tire pressure (five to ten pounds) over the pressure shown on the sidewall or doorjamb. Besides compensating for lost pressure, this will help clear packed snow and ice from the treads.

### The Chain Gang

Many of our readers are in areas where chains are required by law and they're out of luck; they just have to suck it up and chain up when ordered to do it. If you're using AWD or 4WD vehicles, it is recommended that you install chains on all four wheels.

If you carry chains for no other reason than to extricate your vehicle from being hopelessly stuck, there may be another alternative. Snow cables or straps have been around forever and installation was cumbersome at best, particularly in uniform. However, many newer emergency devices are designed for "onetime" usage. Made from plastic, they resemble zip ties and install the same way. Simply insert them through slots or holes in the factory rims, wrap them over the tread and tighten the strap until there is no slack. The portion over the tread contains knobs with studs, like studded snow tires which are banned in many areas. Usually, four straps per drive wheel should be sufficient. While snow chains are sold by tire size, these will fit multiple sizes of tires. There are several brands sold online or in auto big-box stores, usually in bundles of ten or 12, at around ten bucks a bundle. When you're unstuck, simply cut them off and you're on your way.

### Preparing for the Deep Freeze

The two most common time-consum-

ing surprises you'll discover when you leave your home for work (after a winter night's slumber) are frozen windshields and doors, but both can be handled with the remote starter.

But, what if your unit doesn't have a remote starter on the fob? Let's tackle that windshield first. If you can open the doors, get in, fire it up, turn your heater and defrosters on "high," and go back inside for another cup of coffee.

If you can't get in, here are a couple simple tricks to clean the windshield. For snow, use a broom, but if ice covered, you'll need to soften it first. Common spray deicers are the quickest and easiest to use. If you don't have one, a simple mix of three parts vinegar and one part water will work, too, because vinegar contains acetic acid which lowers the melting point of water. This is also handy for prepping the windshield the night before. Another simple concoction contains two parts rubbing alcohol and one part water with a couple drops of dish soap. This will break down the ice so a scraper and defroster can do the rest. These

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mixes are not harmful to your vehicle's finishes. Whatever substance you use, store them inside at room temperature. Of course, NEVER use hot water.

Always keep ice scrapers or snow broom/ice scraper combos handy and in every vehicle you drive. A credit card can work as an emergency scraper, but never use anything metal. One winter morning, one of my detectives came into my office and reported, "Sarge, I need a new windshield in my police car." Curious, I went outside and discovered that, because he feared being late, he used the only scraper he could find – a garden hoe! He was a great detective, but...

Frozen doors can present a real winter challenge which remote openers might not fix. These are caused by rain entering doorjamb and freezing the locks and/or the door seals to the door. Obviously, the first thing to try is to attempt to open the other doors. But, if all doors and locks are frozen shut, you'll need other tactics.

First, we'll attack the door locks (if they have a key opening). The first thing you can do is warm the key (if it does not have an electronic chip) with a lighter, match, candle or hair dryer, or use the hair dryer alone. Using a commercial de-icer and a straw, shoot it directly into the lock. Finally, you can use common hand sanitizer as it contains ethanol and isopropanol which lowers the freezing point of water and can melt the ice inside the lock. Whatever method you decide on, do not force the key into the lock or forcefully twist it. Never use water or lubricants like WD-40® as the grease will gum up the lock.

Assuming you now have the door unlocked, the door might still be frozen shut. You can push on the door around the edges or spray the edges with de-icer or one of your homemade concoctions. A hair dryer will work on the door seals, too. Rubbing alcohol, windshield washer fluid or diluted white vinegar can all be poured into doorjamb, too. Once any of these methods seem to be working, start to chip the ice away from the door edges using a scraper. Never use hot water as it could shatter your door glass.

We all know an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, so the preferable way to defeat ice is to prevent it before it starts and it is simple and inexpensive using plastic trash bags. Place one trash bag under each windshield wiper directly on the windshield. The weight of the precipitation should keep them in place,

but, if it's windy, the bags can be further secured by opening the front doors and tucking a corner of each bag under the top corner of each front door and close them. Simply peel the trash bags off when you're ready to leave.

To prevent frozen doors, roll another trash bag into a roll about the size of a

baseball bat and place it between the door seal and the door frame. The bags can be folded and reused several times.

### On the Road Again

Okay, you've got your cruiser de-iced and roadworthy and you're off to fight crime another day, but how do you



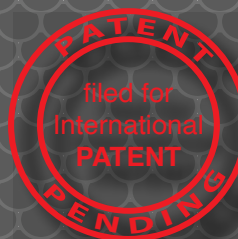
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## THE WHEELS OF JUSTICE

Continued from page 17

keep your noble transport going all shift? Your next radio call may be to block an interstate for hours, or you may be out on a foot search or on a number of other unpleasant activities. You'd like to be able to return to a warm and road ready vehicle, but is that possible? Last winter, I spoke with a Minnesota trooper who, along with other troopers, was working during a horrendous blizzard which had shut down miles of I-35. They worked on foot for hours directing traffic, checking on stranded motorists, moving abandoned cars and trucks, and more. He described it as a "whitemare" and, when they finally returned to their parked cruisers, they could not be found because they were all buried in drifts six to ten feet deep.

That's an extreme example of winter, of course, but there are a couple of devices which allow vehicles to be left running and secure in winter (or summer) weather. The original, the Anti-Theft System, is from Tremco Police Products and your unit can be left running without a key in the ignition

or fob in the car. It is activated when the vehicle is placed in "park" and cannot be driven until a concealed switch is activated. The system plugs directly into the factory wiring harness and does not void the factory warranty.

A similar system is Secure Idle and it also allows the ignition key or fob to be removed while in park. Both devices protect your expensive vehicles and equipment from theft and also your valuable K-9s in the summer.

### Quick Tips

1. Check your antifreeze. Some makes require specific types, but the premixed 50/50 ratio is best in all of them. Antifreeze should last 50K to 150K miles or three to five years.
2. Visibility is a priority. Protect your windshield with winter-rated wiper blades and always top off the washer fluid with a winter-rated product. Check it frequently during heavy usage.

3. Check your battery for possible "dead" cells or low fluid.
4. Gas tanks should be topped off when reaching half full because condensation can form on the walls inside the tank and freeze.
5. After your glass is clean and the snow or ice has been cleaned from the roof, you're ready, but the experts advise DON'T start driving until the engine is warmed up to 190 degrees.

Finally, every fleet vehicle (regardless of assignment) should be equipped with a winter preparedness kit containing the aforementioned scrapers, de-icers, tire straps, and even a collapsible military-type shovel. Because you have both officers and the public to protect, the kit should also include water, energy bars, emergency blankets, and all your other normal gear. **P&SN**

*Sergeant James Post appreciates your comments and suggestions for future articles. He can be reached at [kopkars@arkansas.net](mailto:kopkars@arkansas.net).*

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# PRODUCT HIGHLIGHT

**FLIR®**



The new FLIR **Scion™ PTM** packs high-performance thermal imaging and FLIR TruWITNESS® compatibility into a rugged, IP67-rated handheld monocular. Capable of geotagged video recording and live video transmission, the **Scion PTM** can instantly stream encrypted thermal footage to the command center via wireless network. A 60 Hz refresh rate and picture-in-picture zoom capture minute details from a distance and maintain peripheral awareness for constant thermal supervision of suspects and team members.

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**PULSAR**

Pulsar has introduced three new versions of the pocket-sized **Axion Thermal Monocular**.

The **Axion XM30** and **XM38** both boast a smaller 12 micron pixel pitch HD AMOLED 1024x768 display and the **Axion Key XM30** has a LCOS 960x720 display; eight color modes give you the option to go from traditional white-hot to the color of your choice in just a few clicks.

The **Axions** are submersible in three feet of water for up to 30 minutes and have magnesium alloy bodies which deliver reliability in extreme weather conditions. The **Monoculars** are powered with a rechargeable lithium-ion battery, with up to four hours per charge. The Stream Vision App with onboard video recording (16GB of memory) is available with the **XM30** and the **XM38**.

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## Night Vision and Thermal Imaging Equipment

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The **Aurora** is based on the SiOnyx Ultra Low Light technology which, until now, was only available in the highest end night vision optics. SiOnyx has developed a new semiconductor process which enhances the infrared sensitivity of silicon-based imaging. This provides highly defined color images and video during the day and twilight, combined with high-resolution viewing in near total darkness.

Through free companion apps on iOS™ and Android®, you can view in real time or control the **Aurora** directly from your phone. The **Aurora** uses GPS combined with an accelerometer and compass to accurately guide users day or night.

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### TACTICAL NIGHT VISION COMPANY



The **TNVC ANVS to BNVD Cable Adapter** allows users to power modern L3Harris BNVD-pattern devices (PVS-31A, GPNVG-18, etc.) from an external battery pack using common existing, standard USGI ANVIS-pattern battery packs such as the AB Night Vision LPBP-GO without having to purchase new and costly battery pack and cable assemblies to power their devices or replace lost or damaged assemblies.

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### TACTICAL NIGHT VISION COMPANY

The USSOCOM-issued **AN/PAS-29A COTI** (Clip-On Thermal Imager) has already been in service on the front-lines of the Global War on Terrorism for several years and is now available for law enforcement and commercial sales. The five ounce **AN/PAS-29A** attaches to existing night vision devices and overlays a thermal image into the night vision goggle, providing the user with unparalleled situational awareness and capability. Agency and unit pricing is available.

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**ZISTOS CORP.**



The **ZistosHD Dual Mode Thermal Tactical System** offers a wireless video tool which allows tactical teams to make safe visual assessments of dangerous or inaccessible conditions—instantly switching between thermal and IR illuminated black-and-white video images. The images are viewed on specially configured displays and can be shared simultaneously using safe encrypted wireless or wired operation.

The **ZistosHD System** is powered by the weather-resistant handle which offers integrated push buttons for controlling video record, zoom functions, motorized camera pan controls and more. This new design maximizes its use in different tactical applications with a rechargeable battery runtime of 6+ hours and an array of field-swappable telescoping poles and camera modules.

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# Do Cops Need a College Education?

A quality college education can offer the highest return on investment for police agencies.

**DR. CHUCK RUSSO AND  
KEVIN DUFFY**

**T**he late sixties was a time of great political and social unrest. Racial tensions were high, Vietnam War protests were raging, and the lack of connection between police and their communities was the topic of the day.

On July 28, 1967, President Lyndon Johnson appointed the National Advisory Committee on Civil Disorders, also known as the Kerner Commission. One of the many observations made by the Commission was that the community and the police were separated by mistrust, misinformation and prejudice. As a result, the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration released federal funding for better training and education of police officers. Although not mandatory, it was recommended that all police officers have at least a two year college degree. The time was 1970.

Forty-five years later, we are still asking the same questions: Does a police officer need a postsecondary education or is it sufficient to have in-service training focused on critical topics? The short answer is: Both are needed.

Agencies absolutely need to ensure both sworn and civilian employees receive up-to-date information on critical topics through in-service training. Most agencies do this and have found all types of training modalities to accomplish it. However, there is not the same widespread support for college education. While studies over the past many years have established the benefits of a college-educated officer, they haven't quantified how much better the college degree makes the officer.

## **The College-educated Officer: A Profile**

In 2010, Jason Ryberg of Michigan State University wrote an article entitled "The Effect of Higher Education on Police



Behavior." Based on his research, it points out an important fact: Police behavior regarding arrest and search show no significant difference when considering college education. Officers with a college education and those without behave the same. The author points out that there is little discretion in making arrests or conducting searches, since both are governed by law and court decisions. However, these are just two of the areas in which police utilize discretion.

The Michigan State study looked at another area of discretion: use of force. The conclusion was that, although higher education has little influence on arrests and searches, a college education significantly reduces the likelihood of force occurring.

Since use-of-force cases account for many police disciplinary issues, the next step is to look at discipline cases of college-educated officers versus those without a degree. According to a 2006 report by *USA Today*, "In an analysis of disciplinary cases against Florida cops from 1997 to 2002, the International Association of Chiefs of Police found that officers with only high school educations were the subjects of 75 percent of all disciplinary actions. Officers with four year degrees accounted for 11 percent of such actions."

"Up until now, the studies have been much more anecdotal, indicating that ed-

ucation may matter," said William Terrill, an associate professor of criminal justice at Michigan State and a coauthor of the Ryberg study. "We found that a college education significantly reduces the likelihood of force occurring. The difference is real. It truly is because the officer was more educated, not because the suspect was more resistant."

"There's so much more discretion with the use of force and more room for biases to play out," Terrill said. "High school-educated officers are more apt to say, 'I'm the law and I have the authority to make you do it, and I'm going to put my hands on you and make you do it.' Officers with a four year degree are more skilled at resolving problems without having to resort to force. They're giving the citizen alternative means of compliance. They're not just relying on the stick."

## **Advantages of Employing College-educated Officers**

Although studies on this topic have been both scarce and mixed, there is general agreement on several fronts.

They agree that college-educated officers tend to:

- Be involved in fewer use-of-force events;
- Hold less authoritarian beliefs than their colleagues with no college education;



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## DO COPS NEED A COLLEGE EDUCATION?

Continued from page 22

- Get higher ratings from their supervisors;
- Get fewer citizen complaints;
- Take fewer sick days;
- Have fewer injuries;
- Place a higher value on ethical behaviors;
- Have better communications skills – both verbally and in writing; and
- Have markedly better skills with computers and technology (especially those with more recent educations).

### Is Experience as Beneficial as Education?

Some studies have pointed out that the desirable characteristics of a college-educated officer are also found in the experienced officer of 11 years. Experience and education, it has been concluded, have a similar effect on police behavior, but experience takes longer to accumulate, and mistakes may be made along the way.

"Irrespective of experience, college is going to give you bang for the buck right

out of the gate," Terrill said. "By having an education, you're actually speeding up the process of experience and you're getting the effect of better policing in the form of less force."

### The Florida Breakdown

We decided to conduct our own research on this topic and evaluated education levels of officers in the state of Florida. Using the Automated Training Management System (ATMS) records for March 30, 2017, we found the educational information of all sworn personnel in the state which included all law enforcement, corrections and correctional probation officers:

#### Educational Breakdown

High School Education: 62.4%  
Associate's Degree: 11%  
Bachelor's Degree: 23.1%  
Master's Degree: 3.1%  
Ph.D: 0.2%

This summary shows that almost two-thirds of Florida officers lacked any college degree. (It should be mentioned that all correctional probation officers need at least a bachelor's degree to apply.) The

data also indicates that, when an officer pursues an associate's degree, he (or she) is most likely to continue to the bachelor's degree level.

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement further breaks down agency requirements for hire into categories, two of which deal directly with education. By looking at these agencies in separate categories, we can get a better idea of how police agencies, sheriff's departments and state agencies in Florida recruit and promote their staff:

#### Police Departments (248 agencies)

18 require AA/AS for hire – 7.3%  
3 require BA/BS for hire – 1.2%  
28 require "some college" for promotion – 11.4%  
41 require AA/AS for promotion – 16.8%  
18 require BA/BS for promotion – 7.3%

#### Sheriff's Departments (67 agencies)

0 require AA/AS for hire – 0%  
0 require BA/BS for hire – 0%  
4 require "some college" for promotion – 5.9%  
5 require AA/AS for promotion – 7.4%  
1 requires BA/BS for promotion – 1.5%

#### State Agencies (34 agencies, includes 20



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# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

## George Washington University

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Police and Security Studies (B.S.)

Developed in consultation with DC-area law enforcement experts and police specialists, and drawn from faculty expertise from six of GW's schools, the police and security studies bachelor's degree completion program aims to create more effective professionals, developing problem-solving approaches, as well as communication and leadership skills. Taught fully online by law enforcement and criminal justice experts, this innovative curriculum will empower students to confront crime and rise up the ranks. The program is fully online so the content and schedule are designed to meet the needs of full-time law enforcement professionals who are balancing a demanding job and family obligations. The program can be completed in just over two years.

## College of Saint Elizabeth

[cse.edu/academics/prof-studies/criminal-justice](http://cse.edu/academics/prof-studies/criminal-justice)

Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice; Master of Arts in Justice Administration and Public Service

At CSE, small class size maximizes student/professor engagement and one academic advisor is assigned to a student for their whole academic journey.

For the bachelor's program, sworn law enforcement officers receive a 25% discount and college credit is awarded for police academy training and some in-service training. Depending on the number of transfer credits, the program can be completed fully online.

For the totally online master's program, LEOs receive a 50% tuition discount with 30 credits needed for the MA degree – a capstone project is required in lieu of a thesis. Graduates of a number of command levels schools and programs can receive graduate credit.

A combined degree program allows an undergraduate

to register for up to 12 graduate credits at undergraduate tuition while completing their BA program. The credits count double – once for the BA degree and once for the MA degree.

*U.S. News & World Report* ranked CSE 14th for 2019 and they have been in the top 25 for the past three years. **AffordableColleges.com** ranked their program #3 in 2018.

Contact Dr. Jim Ford (retired LEO) at [jford@cse.edu](mailto:jford@cse.edu) for more information.

## University of Cincinnati Online

[uccj.online](http://uccj.online)

Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice; Master of Science in Criminal Justice

The UC Online Bachelor's in Criminal Justice program is for those who want a career in criminal justice or crime prevention. The bachelor's program is 100% online and features a comprehensive curriculum with classes spanning the breadth of criminal justice and criminology to help students prepare for a career in law enforcement, corrections, supervision, security, loss prevention, and public safety by gaining expertise in communication, criminal and civil law, ethics and leadership.

The online Master of Science in Criminal Justice program approaches the study of criminal justice and crime from an interdisciplinary perspective, drawing insight from sociology, criminology, psychology, and law. Designed to achieve core objectives such as learning research skills; knowledge of social science and human behavior; and criminal justice theory, the program was ranked 8th best in the country for 2019 and the School of Justice is consistently ranked among the top 15 Best Criminal Justice Schools by *U.S. News and World Report*.

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A new version of the High Volume Burst Fogger for FREEZE+P, CLEAROUT, and PUNCH II aerosol subject control sprays is available. This new design utilizes a spring-loaded flip top, replacing the "press to break" cover.

The Flip Top Burst version still uses the proven high volume valve mechanism for quick dispensing without sacrificing accuracy or spray distance. The High Volume Flip Top Burst version is available in two ounce, four ounce and 16 ounce sizes in FREEZE+P NF, DEEP FREEZE, PUNCH II NF, and DEEP PUNCH. A six ounce size of CLEAROUT vapor formula is also available with the Flip Top Burst or traditional total release lock down actuator.

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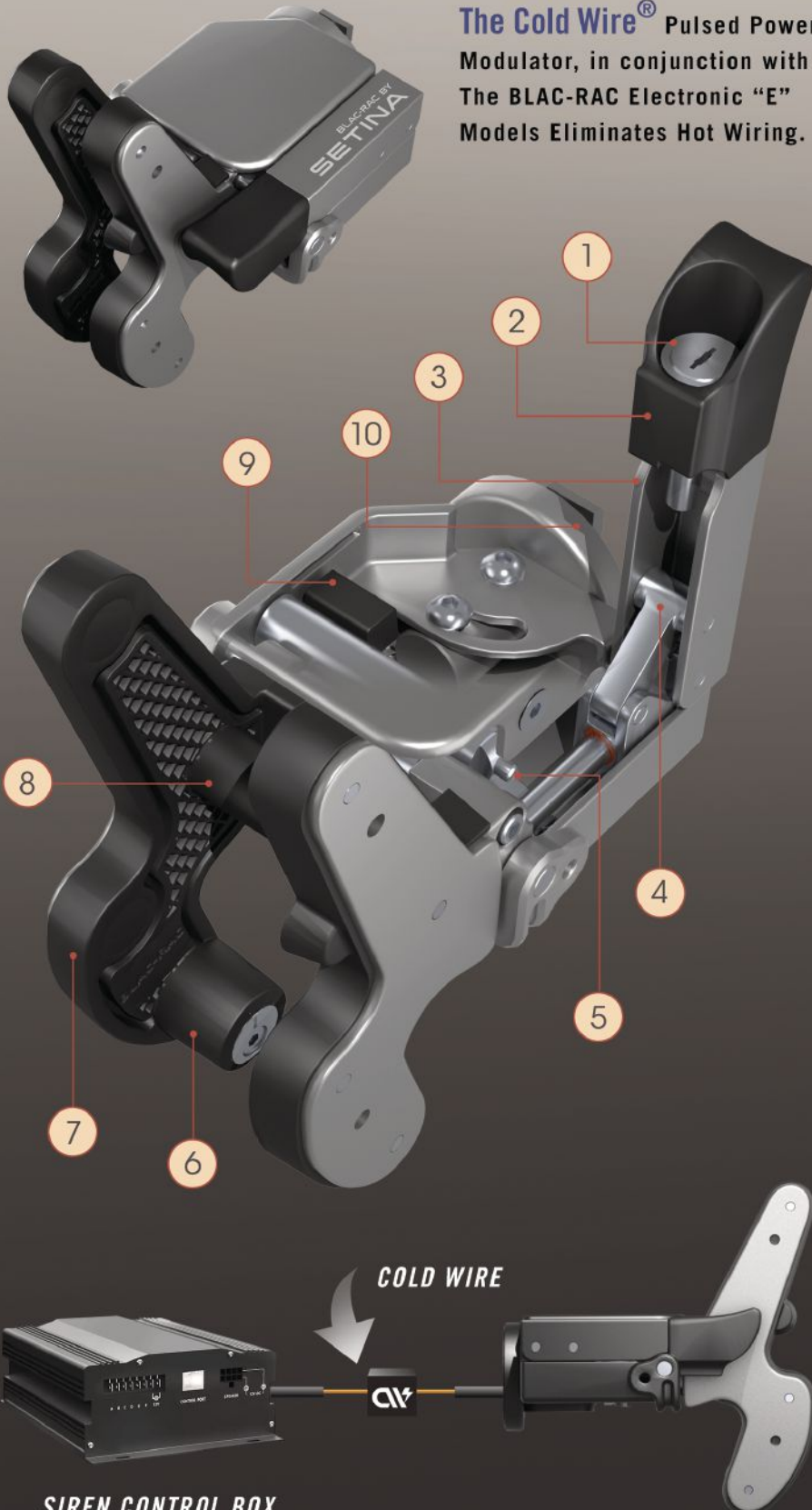


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## DO COPS NEED A COLLEGE EDUCATION?

Continued from page 24

State Attorney's Offices)

- 7 require AA/AS for hire – 20.5%
- 0 require BA/BS for hire – 0%
- 0 require “some college” for promotion – 0%
- 1 requires AA/AS for promotion – 3%
- 1 requires BA/BS for promotion – 3%

### The Availability of College Education for Police Officers

Twenty years ago, officers were typically dependent on what was available in their own backyard. Community colleges were usually an option and, if the officers were lucky, they had access to a state university within a reasonable driving distance. Some had private universities in their areas, but, if tuition exceeded an agency's reimbursement policy, it was difficult to justify the extra expense.

Today, such physical barriers have been removed thanks to the prevalence of online learning. Officers can now access high quality, cost-effective education from any computer. Many can even complete coursework from an agency computer; even the MDT in a patrol car provides

an officer access to an online classroom. While some universities, such as American Military University, are based on an online delivery system, other colleges, such as Daytona State College, offer both traditional and online courses. Some of these higher education institutions even accept academy hours as transfer credit which means recruit academy courses can count towards an undergraduate degree.

The question agencies need to ask now is: “Where will our education reimbursement money do the most good?” Agencies and officers need to perform their due diligence to ensure they are getting a proper return on both time and money. It is imperative that the chosen college or university should possess the proper accreditation from one of the six regional accrediting bodies to ensure these sparse resources – time and money – are being well spent. **P&SN**

*Dr. Chuck Russo is the Program Director of Criminal Justice at American Military University. He began his career in law enforcement in 1987 in central Florida*

*and was involved all areas of patrol, training, special operations, and investigations before retiring from law enforcement in 2013. Dr. Russo continues to design and instruct courses, as well as act as a consultant for education, government and industry throughout the United States and the Middle East. His recent research and presentations focus on emerging technology and law enforcement applications, in addition to post-traumatic stress and on-line learning.*

*Kevin Duffy is Assistant Chair of Criminal Justice at Daytona State College. He began his law enforcement career in 1973 in central Florida and was involved in all areas of patrol, training, supervision, support services, and special operations before retiring from law enforcement in 2014. Duffy continues to design and instruct courses, as well as act as a consultant for education, government and industry throughout the United States and the Middle East. Through CJ Training, Duffy provides in-service online training solutions to law enforcement agencies.*

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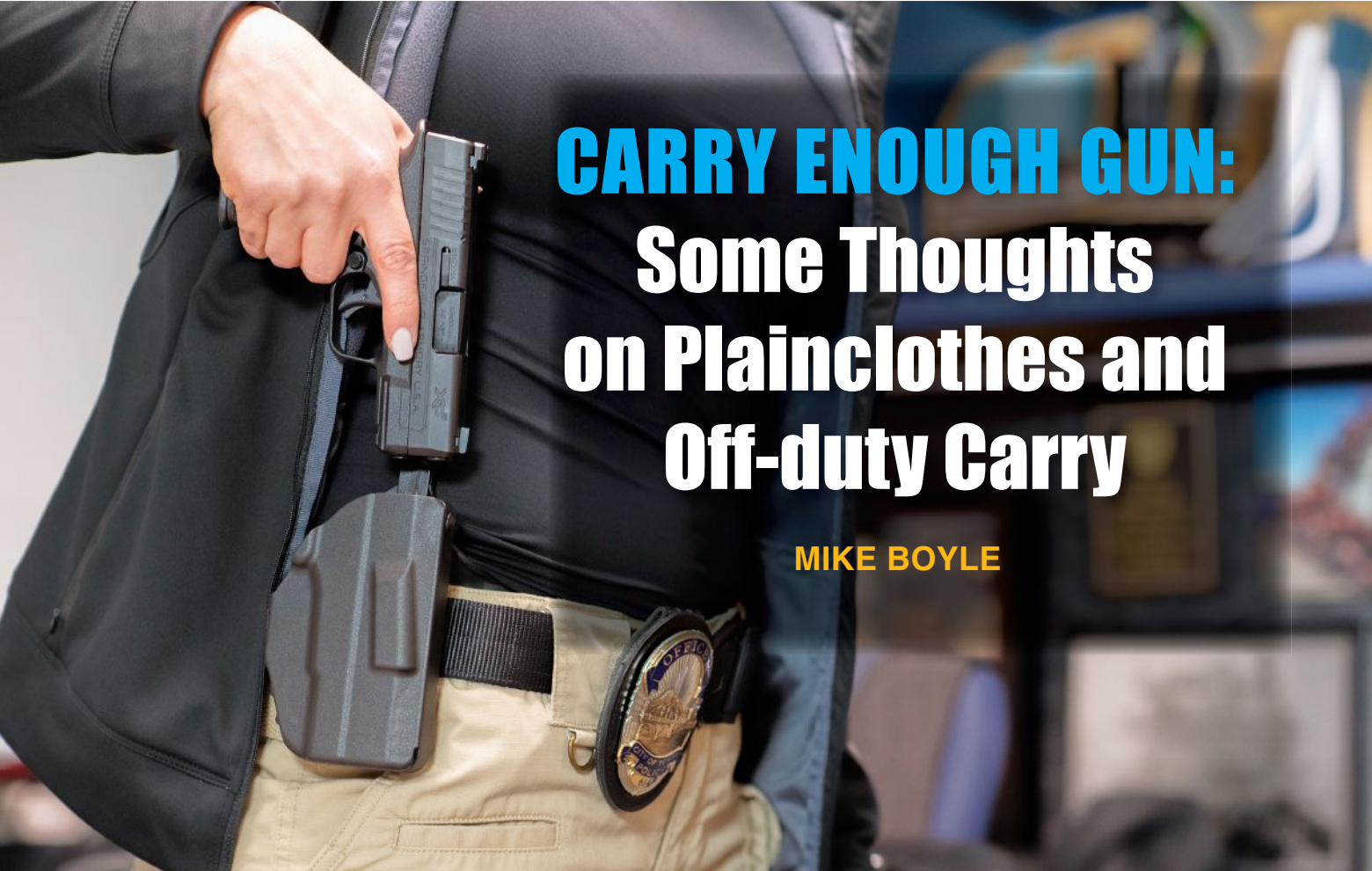
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# CARRY ENOUGH GUN: Some Thoughts on Plainclothes and Off-duty Carry

MIKE BOYLE

**When beginning a law enforcement career, one of the biggest lifestyle adjustments remains adapting to the gun.**

**T**he badge and the uniform do indeed identify you as a law enforcement officer, but the gun, and the tremendous responsibility which comes with it, is what really sets you apart. That very visible pistol in the duty holster is indeed the symbol of authority.

All law enforcement officers – both uniformed patrol, as well as plainclothes investigators – carry a firearm while on duty. The majority continue to pack heat while on their own time. Four decades ago, I made a decision to carry a firearm whenever I was legally authorized to do so. Quite simply, unless you have a crystal ball, there is no predicting when danger might arrive and rolling the dice did not appeal to me. The fact that you are off duty does not make you immune to danger and going unarmed just makes you another potential victim.

Back in the day, medium to large frame revolvers were the service weapon of choice for uniformed patrol, while short barrel snubs were favored by detectives, as well as for all off-duty carry. My outfit pretty much fell in line and all of our officers were issued a four inch service revolver, as well as a snub for off-duty or backup carry. If you were so inclined, you

could purchase your own plainclothes revolver, as long as it was a steel frame Colt® or Smith & Wesson® in .38 Special or .357 Magnum. My choice was a S&W Model 19 Combat Magnum with a 2½ inch barrel which served me well for years.

Back in the 1980s, the winds began to shift and many departments switched from revolvers to autopistols for duty carry. It was inevitable that the same trend would carry over to the handguns used for more discreet carry and small pistols began to encroach on the turf formally dominated by snub revolvers.

## Reality Check

Once they got over the cool factor, new coppers quickly discovered that carrying a handgun full time is a major inconvenience. Depending on the clothing worn, the time of year or the social setting, discreetly hiding a handgun can be a challenge. Friends and family members will often question your sanity taking a gun everywhere you go. As a result, some officers have come to the conclusion that packing a gun is too much of a bother and simply don't do it. Others only carry a gun on occasions when they feel there is a higher probability of danger. Yet an-

other fix is to carry one of the really tiny, small caliber guns which can easily be hidden somewhere on the body.

To get a better handle on this misguided logic, let's consider a few possibilities. For me, having no gun at all is a nonstarter. When confronted with danger, you have no choice but to take action. This also applies to "sometimes carry." Danger tends to come when we least expect it.

Any cop with more than a year or two of time on the job will tell you that some of his (or her) more exciting moments occurred while performing routine tasks in "safe neighborhoods."

Have you ever had to take enforcement action off duty? In some situations, it's best to act as a trained observer, but, in others, our DNA kicks in and we have no alternative but to take action. Are you comfortable doing this with an inferior gun or no gun at all?

## Making an Educated Choice

Comfort and convenience often guide our decision making. But, if you carry a pistol which is too small, unsatisfactory performance is pretty much a guarantee. Consider for a moment that you might actually have to use the firearm to stop a



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**Circle 1036 for More Information**

Continued from page 30



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determined adversary who represents an imminent threat of death to you or others. Of course, any handgun can prove lethal, but our goal is to stop a threat as quickly as possible. This is best achieved with service caliber cartridges; handguns chambered for the 9mm or .38 Special are a good place to begin. Small caliber handguns may fill a useful role as last ditch backups, but there are better tools available.

Really small handguns are difficult to shoot to a high standard. Short grip frames,

along with an abbreviated sighting plane, play havoc with marksmanship potential, particularly when shooting at speed. Fortunately, the new crop of subcompact and single stack service caliber pistols solve those problems. While we may not be able to perform to the same standard as with our full-size service pistol, downrange performance is light-years beyond the pocket pistols of old. Officers in my outfit run a mix of small GLOCK®, plus a few SIG SAUER® 365s and S&W M&P® Shield™ pistols and the results speak for themselves. Excellent choices are also available from Beretta, Kahr Arms and Springfield Armory®.

Is a snub revolver still a viable alterna-



**Snub revolvers have much to offer for officers who put in the time to become proficient with them.**

tive? I would give that a qualified "yes." Snubs are easy to shoot, but difficult to shoot well, particularly for officers who cut their teeth on autopistols. However, if you're willing to put in the time, a small revolver with a two or three inch barrel is a great companion. I'll confess to not being a fan of the small frame snubs in .357 Magnum which very few people can shoot well. In .38 Special, these same revolvers still hold an advantage to pistols chambered for .380 ACP.

As much of a sentimental attachment I might have for revolvers, I recognize it's a square gun world and most cops are better served with an autopistol. No matter what technology you choose, the bottom line remains your ability to quickly make decisive hits on one or more threats.

## Terminal Performance

Over the last 30 years, the performance of handgun ammunition has taken a quantum leap. In the aftermath of the 1986 Dade County shootout, the FBI established standards for the performance of law enforcement ammunition. Test rounds were fired into 10% ordnance gelatin cov-

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**Kahr K9 (left) in 9mm is the same size as the Beretta® 85 (right) in .380 ACP. The 9mm outperforms the .380 ACP in every way.**

ered with barriers common in police action shootings and qualities such as penetration and expansion were noted. While we may not agree with every aspect of the FBI protocol, it did raise the bar relative to the performance of ammunition selected for law enforcement use.

More recently, the FBI has stepped back from favoring larger calibers, such as the .45 ACP, .40 S&W and 10mm, and has gotten behind the worldwide standard 9mm. They reasoned that, although the

big bores might hold a slight advantage, improvements in bullet design and the fact that shooters of average ability can shoot the light kicking 9mm significantly better has blurred the lines. What's the bottom line? Most of the small hideout pistols are chambered for 9mm, but, if you prefer .40 S&W or .45 ACP, they're out there as well. If you can shoot it well and effectively conceal it, by all means, have at it.

What about .38 Special? The ancient .38 Special was developed around the same time as the 9mm and it, too, has been given a performance boost. Major manufacturers such as Federal®, Remington®, Speer®, and Winchester® are all turning out premium quality ammunition which will reliably expand from the short barrel of a .38 Special snub.

Many experts consider the .380 ACP cartridge to be the ground floor for personal defense. There are, indeed, some very handy pistols chambered for this cartridge – many no larger than old school .25 ACPs, but we can do much better. For a slight penalty in size, one can upgrade to a 9mm which generates significantly

more muzzle energy. True, there have been improvements in .380 ACP performance, but it will always be a weak sister to 9mm.

Light, small pistols will buck in the hand more and exhibit greater muzzle flip. In poor light, they may yield more muzzle flash, depending on the ammunition utilized, but they are quite manageable. Ultimately, your preferred handgun should strike a balance between shootability and power in a package you can effectively conceal.

## Parking

This is truly the golden era of holsters as many well-thought-out designs are available in every possible configuration. A true concealment holster will enable the wearer to effectively hide the handgun in a position where it can be effectively brought into play. This is a quality often lost on many off-the-rack holsters. Other requirements include durability, security, comfort, and the capability for a one-handed return. Many of us have discovered that having more than one style of holster for our preferred carry piece is



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**Circle 1039 for More Information**

Continued from page 33



## A New High Capacity Leader

In late September 2019, Springfield Armory introduced the Hellcat™ which is now the highest capacity micro compact 9mm currently available. Ideal for plainclothes and off-duty carry, this pistol touts a capacity of 11+1 with its flush-fitting magazine (which comes with a pinky extension) and 13+1 with its extended mag (both are included).

The three inch barreled pistol measures one inch wide and weighs 18.3 ounces empty. The overall length measures six inches, along with a height of only four inches.

As a result of the increasing popularity of optics-ready carry guns, the Hellcat is also offered in an OSP™ (Optical Sight Pistol) configuration with a milled slide to accept the smallest popular micro red dots on the market.

Both models feature the U-Dot™ sight system which comprises a tritium and luminescent front sight paired with a tactical rack U-notch rear. This setup enables rapid target acquisition within a wide range of lighting conditions, and the direct mount capability of the OSP allows for co-witnessing of the U-Dot sights with a red dot.

The frame features Adaptive Grip Texture™, a pressure activated texture featuring a pattern of staggered pyramid shapes. The taller pyramids have a flattened top to ensure comfort in the waistband, while the shorter pyramids come to a point and are engaged when the pistol is firmly gripped.

A full-length guide rod and dual active recoil spring offers a smooth recoil impulse and it also features a standoff device at the muzzle which allows the pistol to fire when pressed against a target.

Stay tuned for a test and evaluation feature article of the Hellcat coming up in the next issue of *P&S*N.

Extended 13 round magazine



**Concealed in plain view?**  
A low profile bag can accommodate a small, service caliber pistol such as the Kahr K9.

the way to go. This will give you the ability to better adapt to the seasons and the clothing you wear.

A few caveats about holster selection are in order. With the right holster, one can conceal even a service-size gun under light clothing. On the downside, a poor design will give you up – even when carrying a small handgun. Some holsters might seem like a good idea at the time of purchase, but turn out to be dismal failures. I suppose this is unavoidable as our body types can be very different and what works for one person may not work for the next. Don't be discouraged if your first effort comes up short. Quality holsters will cost more than a few bucks, but this is no place to cut corners. Buy cheap – buy twice!

Three seasons of the year, my concealed carry pistol rides in an Outside-the-WaistBand (OWB) rig which is effectively concealed from view. I'm a fairly big guy and my wardrobe can be best described as casual. For me, it's not especially difficult to keep even a fair-size pistol out of view or prevent it from printing through a covering garment. Individuals who have to wear different attire may not have the same leeway.

A very accessible, yet discreet, way of carrying a handgun is the Inside-the-WaistBand (IWB) holster. As long as you can cover the grip of the pistol with a garment, you're in business. Again, this solution may not work for everyone, but it remains a very good choice.

Some of my associates have moved their handgun forward of the hip and utilize what has become known as Appendix Inside-the-WaistBand (AIWB) carry. It is a viable choice, but it just doesn't work for me. It does indeed hide the gun even better and makes for a very fast draw. By all means, check it out.

Other carry modes, such as shoulder, ankle and pocket carry, are alternatives, but might be best categorized as "sometimes solutions" rather than an ideal choice. In certain situations, they may be the only way to go. When dressed in cargo shorts, I've been able to carry

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a GLOCK 26 in a scabbard designed by Pocket Concealment Systems without tipping my hand. It won't work with a pair of jeans, but it remains a good choice in the summer weather when T-shirts and shorts are the order of the day.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention bags. There are all sorts of bags and pouches which can be utilized to carry a handgun which, in this day and age, don't attract a lot of attention. Avoid bags which look a little too "gunny." Instead, look for one of those pouches in which we harbor all those electronic devices we can't live without.

### **Complete the Package**

A sturdy belt designed for carrying a holstered handgun goes a long way in

keeping you under the radar. Off-the-rack department store belts will give you up in the blink of an eye – even when carrying a small pistol or revolver. One of the best places to start your search is the various holster manufacturers who turn out purpose-designed gun belts. A properly designed gun belt will bring the gun in tight to the body, aid concealment and stabilize the pistol for a more efficient draw stroke. Don't cut corners on belts.

Do you carry extra ammunition? Should you find yourself in an off-duty situation, don't expect the cavalry to roll up in a moment's notice. True, most situations are resolved with few shots fired, but you just may be the exception to the rule. Either way, I wouldn't feel especially comfortable in a hostile environment with a half loaded gun. Carry at least one reload for your handgun and preferably more for a low capacity revolver.

Carrying magazines on the belt can present problems when you want to go low profile. A less visible alternative remains pocket carry and a few firms are turning out pouches for that purpose. One of the best examples I've come across are the magazine pouches from Extra Carry which retain the magazine in a fitted compartment. A clip similar to that found on many folding knives secures the pouch to the top of the pocket for quick withdraw. Magazines are kept free of pocket debris and are instantly available for an efficient reload.

### **Don't Neglect the Software**

I'm no different than the next guy and I often devote a disproportionate part of my practice time to things I'm already good at. Of course, what we really need to work on are the things we don't do well.

Many cops have an inflated idea as to their abilities based on their performance on the qualification course. They reason that, since they have no problem "qualifying" with their preferred concealed carry piece, they are well prepared for any emergency out in the real world. The truth of the matter is that most qualification courses test only basic marksmanship skills, typically in very generous time frames.

To get a better handle on your true abilities, work that hideout gun in some more realistic scenarios which include movement, draw from concealment, poor light, and more than one threat. You may indeed come to the conclusion as I did that more hard work and/or a more decisive carry gun is in order. **P&SN**

*Captain Mike Boyle served with the New Jersey Division of Fish & Wildlife, Bureau of Law Enforcement, and has been an active firearms instructor for more than 30 years. He has been an assistant police academy director and remains active as an academy rangemaster and instructor. Mike has served on the Board of Directors of the International Association of Law Enforcement Firearms Instructors (IALEFI) since 1996. He is the architect and coordinator of IALEFI's Master Instructor Development Program.*

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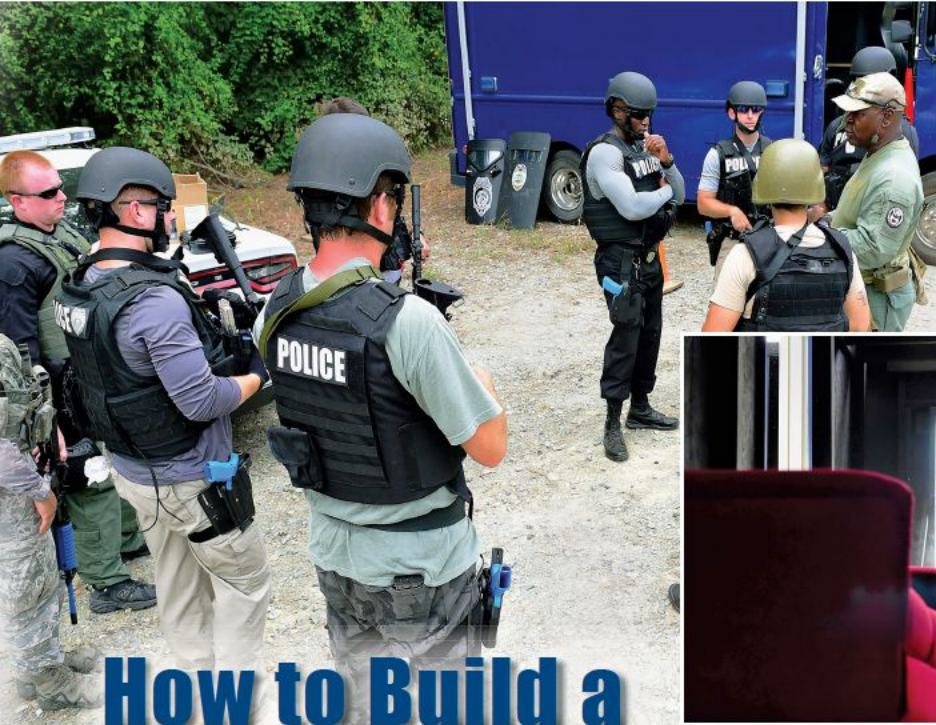
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# How to Build a Multijurisdictional Special Operations Team

JOSHUA LOGAN



Many agencies have determined that building and maintaining a SWAT team is far beyond their means. However, a solution does exist.

**M**ost everyone knows that the New York Police Department (NYPD), the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) and other big agencies have a Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team; in fact, they have several of them and whole support groups which go along with them. What many don't realize is that most agencies don't come anywhere close to being as big as the LAPD or the NYPD and, therefore, don't have the resources to operate

their own SWAT team. Over half of the law enforcement agencies in the United States are comprised of 50 officers or less. Sure, 50 officers is enough to facilitate a SWAT team, but does that leave many officers available for other assignments? Yes, but not much. So, what's the answer? It's sharing resources. It's been done all over the nation and, once you overcome the challenges of a shared command and combined resources, it's a very effective solution.

## How Much Manpower Is Needed?

An entry team, if mandated, can operate with as few as six officers. However, that's a minimum number and leaves no room for losses, leave, etc. Eight officers is generally a better number and, if you have ten, then you can pick and choose which members you'll need on any given entry (while the rest fulfill other necessary roles). If your SWAT team is comprised of 12 fully qualified and certified operational team members, then you have enough to account for Murphy's Law.

As a general rule, for every officer you have on the entry team, you need another officer for support. Not only do you need a properly trained inner-perimeter team, but you may also need hostage negotiators, crew to man vehicles as necessary, and more. Even if the vehicles are on scene, but not in use, you need an officer to stay with each vehicle (if at all possible). These support personnel don't have to be assigned to the special operations unit full time, but they do need to be properly trained and available for call out.

So, let's assume a minimum six person SWAT team. That means at least six more officers on call and properly trained – for

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a total of 12. Each of the “support six” should, if possible, be trained and qualified as SWAT officers as well. In the worst of situations, if an officer on the team is taken out of service, this support team is the pool from which you pull your replacement officer(s). Accordingly, if you’re going to pull together a bare-bones minimal multi-jurisdictional team, you need to plan for 12 members. To get 12 qualified people to meet standards and successfully complete training, you’ll likely need 20 to 25 candidates. If you’re combining agencies to come up with that many candidates, what does the combined agencies’ available sworn manpower need to be? It can be as little as 50, but 75+ is better. You don’t want to pull your operational candidates from a limited pool of “what’s available.” It’s far better to have numerous options rather than the odd assortment of officers whose hearts really aren’t in it, but who want the overtime pay.

## The Next Big Challenge

After determining the number of officers you’ll need to form your team and support element, the largest challenge you will face is administrative. The chief executive officer from every jurisdiction involved will want some say in how the team is built, run, called out, and commanded. A special operations team cannot be run by five or ten different “bosses.” The team has to be commanded by a single officer of sufficient rank and, more importantly, one who has earned sufficient respect from all of the chiefs involved in the project. This command individual has to understand the quirks and personality characteristics of all the chiefs involved. He/she has to understand the political challenges which each chief is dealing with and be capable of sufficient diplomacy/tact to accomplish the tasks set forth, balanced against every roadblock which may be thrown up by this myriad assortment of chiefs. That alone is reason why the team command individual needs to have excellent stress management and time management skills. Undoubtedly, the command individual will work more hours toward the team’s development, training and operations than any other team member will.

One solution to the individual command/multiple agency oversight challenge is the formation of an oversight committee comprised of two or three chiefs or deputy chiefs assigned to represent an agency’s interests. It is most helpful if at least one of the members of the oversight committee has some knowledge of how special operations teams function and what their needs are in order to work effectively. If more than three agencies are involved, then the members of the oversight committee can

rotate on a 12-18 month participation with staggered start/stop times so that only one member is changing at a time.


Even with such an oversight committee arrangement, the team commander should expect to have to go in front of the various governmental groups – city or town councils – to answer questions and keep the politicians happy. Political leaders will always want to know why their budget dollars are being spent outside their jurisdiction and it’s at that point that the chief involved needs to intervene. The team commander should only ever have to justify his budget requests and expenditures to the oversight committee. When answering questions to politicians, the team com-

mander’s answers should always be about team capabilities, assignments (without compromising confidential information) and the obvious ongoing benefits of the team’s existence.

## Documentation



A lot of oversight questions and misunderstandings can be avoided through the proper development of team establishment documents. Perhaps the very first document which should be created is a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that is signed by the chiefs of all of the potentially involved agencies. This first MoU authorizes research and development of concept and specifies what deliverables

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**Circle 1044 for More Information**

## HOW TO BUILD A MULTIJURISDICTIONAL SPECIAL OPERATIONS TEAM

Continued from page 37

there are. Such a task is usually undertaken by the presumptive team commander, although that role doesn't really exist at that time. There should be a deadline set by the MoU for when all deliverables should be completed and should specify that one copy shall be provided to each chief who has signed the MoU. That list of deliverables/development report should include:

- A solution for sharing arrest authority across the jurisdictional lines – In many areas where such small agencies exist, MoUs which grant or share arrest authority already exist. Where that is in place, those MoUs get copied and included. Where they don't already exist, then a templated MoU to extend those arrest authorities should be included.
- An estimate for first, second and third year budgets for the team – The first year budget should include all foreseen equipment costs and training expenses. This is where the team commander-to-be will be able to showcase his/her scavenging and salvage skills. It's important to remember that the lower the initial costs are, the greater the chance of receiving approval from all involved chiefs as well as the politicians.
- A specification for team member count and what the basic qualifications should be – This same section should delineate team membership composition and justify such count by taking

into consideration the overall strength of the agencies involved. NOTE: It's a realistic possibility that there will be insufficient manpower to justify setting up a team. If that's the case, the team commander-to-be should avoid "fluffing" the numbers to make the concept more appealing. Instead, he/she should simply list the challenge of numbers and offer any solutions which might exist, such as inviting another agency to participate or to wait until the next budget year when greater manpower is anticipated.

- The document should include information on take-home vehicles which are available or needed. The team commander-to-be (TCTB from here on) has to be familiar with each agency's take-home or vehicle assignment policies and what types of vehicles are most commonly available. Due to the amount of equipment each team member will be required to keep available, officers assigned are better served by SUVs than sedans and such might require some shuffling of vehicle assignments within the participating agencies. If such is anticipated, the TCTB should at least discuss the possibility with the fleet managers from those agencies in order to avoid any surprises when the time comes. It also helps the TCTB's case for forming the team if he/she can say that he/she already has confirmed the possibility of making the vehicle reassignments happen with limited cost or headache.

- This document should suggest the formation of an oversight committee and the chain of command which shows the team commander reporting to the oversight committee. A process for rotating oversight committee members, where such is possible given the number of involved agencies, should also be suggested. Mention of a policy which requires the team commander to report on a scheduled basis should be included, but not yet detailed. Such detail would come with the development of more formalized procedures. (Reference the next item.)
- The document should include a list of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the team and where each would fit into the involved agencies' general orders. This section should make it obvious that the SOPs would have to be developed to completion and a process for the oversight committee to review and approve the SOPs.
- If the TCTB is confident in doing so, the document should also recommend a budget sharing method delineating how initial costs should be covered and ongoing costs recouped or shared among the agencies involved. Beyond that initial research and development document, the TCTB should be prepared to offer recommendations, in writing, with justification.

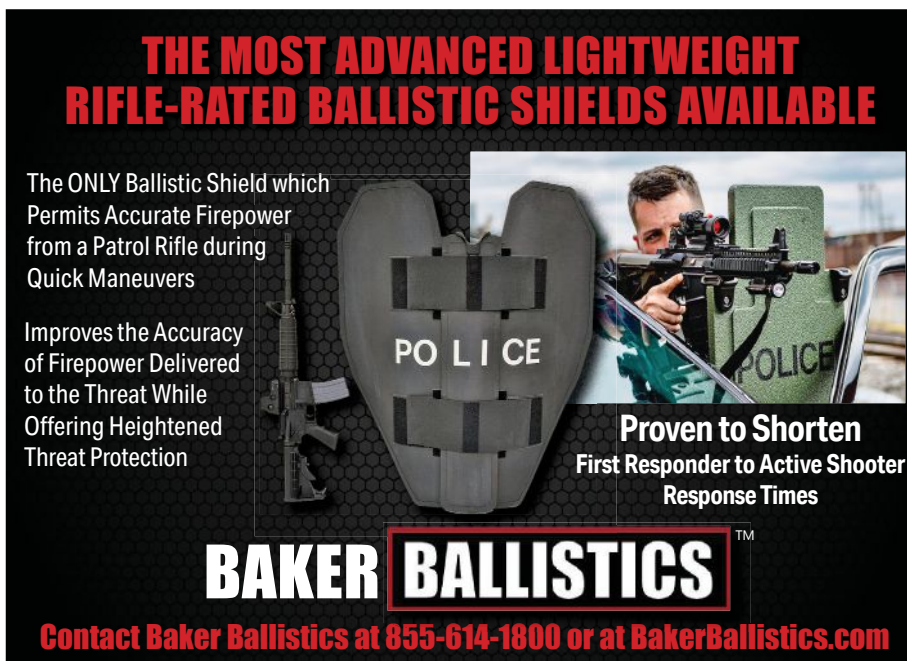
### The Selection Process

This process should detail specific physical performance requirements and include a fitness test with as many applicable objectives as possible. In other words, instead of having a certain number of push-ups, sit-ups, etc., it should have climbing a fence, going through a window, dragging a dummy, carrying X amount of weight, etc. If a height to weight proportion is going to be specified, it should be listed as a maximum body fat percentage or cite another widely used and accepted standard, i.e., a published military table of height/weight/age standards. A recommendation for demonstrated shooting ability/expertise should be detailed (many agencies require their SWAT officers to shoot 90%, or better, on regular qualification courses). Other factors which may be listed and considered are academy standings, time in service and prior military service. The attractiveness of such standards can vary from region to region and should be tailored by the TCTB to suit what is most accepted in his area. No mention of gender, race, age, etc. should be made and none should be considered when selecting potential members. Delineate the standards and accept

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all applicants who meet the standards without prejudice. This is the only impartially defensible way to select the team members.

Note the training requirements for each candidate after selection has been completed, where such training is available and what cost is attached. It behooves the TCTB to remember that even "free" training isn't free as there are costs attached to mandatory equipment which might need to be purchased, training ammunition, additional labor costs to replace the officer(s) who attend the training, etc. It should be noted that the training is neither optional nor complete with a given course. Every operational SWAT team develops its own protocols and the team – both primary and secondary/support – has to be trained on a regular basis in those protocols, as well as practicing and maintaining basic skills. Additional specialty schools may be necessary, depending on how complete the basic SWAT school is which is being attended. Courses on breaching, precision shooting, hostage rescue, etc. may need to be accounted for, even if it's not in the first year or initial costs. As the team's competencies grow through additional training and experience, the long-term value of the team continues to grow beyond the initial costs.

## Equipment

Develop a general list of desired/necessary equipment which needs to be acquired as budgets and opportunity exist. This list should include personal protective equipment such as body armor, gas masks, helmets, gloves, etc. Uniforms and patches are potentially low cost items, but shouldn't be overlooked. The TCTB cannot ever be perceived as "lowballing" or hiding some expense in an effort to make the team concept look more at-

tractive. The documents must be complete and forthright without the appearance of wasting funds. This list of equipment should include specialty vehicles with potential uses and justifications for each. The list should include specialty equipment such as breaching, medical and night vision equipment. The list should also include any weapons which would need to be purchased and training for the proper use of such.

If approached reasonably and with thorough documentation from the onset, a multijurisdictional team can be justified and created with less follow-on headache. Once the paperwork is complete, the t's are crossed and the i's are dotted, the team can be stood up, member selection can begin and...about six months later, the team can actually become functional.

Now, after reading all that, the question becomes, "Who will be the team commander-to-be who takes on the seemingly daunting task of doing the work to create that research and development document?" The answer is easy: He/she is the person who thought, "I can do that," and started thinking about how he/she can accomplish each step as he/she was reading this article. **P&SN**

*Joshua Logan began studying active shooter and mass attack events after the attack at Virginia Tech and commensurate with receiving training on response and recovery to natural disasters and civil disturbances. Joshua began writing for the emergency response community in an attempt to identify and share commonalities in attacks and response protocols. With five years in uniform (so far), he continues to study response and preparedness protocols for the purpose of identifying needed response updates.*

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# FLASHBANG TRAINING OPTIONS: GETTING THE **MOST BANG** FOR YOUR **SWAT TRAINING** **BUCK**

EUGENE NIELSEN



**The Noise Flash Diversionary Device (NFDD), also commonly referred to as a flash sound diversionary device, diversionary device, Distraction Device® or flashbang, has become an essential tool of the trade for tactical teams.**

**N**FDDs are designed to produce dramatic pyrotechnics which are intended to provide a brief distraction without causing permanent injury. Although often used generically, the term “Distraction Device” is a registered trademark of Safariland®/Defense Technology®.

NFDDs may be divided into two categories – those that only produce light and sound and those that also eject either chemicals (OC/CS) or projectiles (rubber pellets). An example of the latter would be the Stingball Grenade. The term “flashbang” is typically applied to flash/sound only devices.

## **A Brief History of NFDDs**

Although the US military has used grenade simulators for more than 60 years, the Operations Research Unit of the British 22 Special Air Service (SAS) Regiment is credited with the development of the first modern NFDD in the early 1970s. The SAS also developed and refined the tactics for the employment of NFDDs. The first documented operational use of a NFDD was by Israeli commandos during Operation Thunderbolt to rescue passengers of a hijacked Air France jetliner at Entebbe, Uganda, on July 3, 1976.

US law enforcement agencies adopted NFDDs from the military. The Los Angeles Police Department D Platoon (SWAT) was one of the first U.S. law enforcement tactical teams to employ NFDDs. The LAPD’s first flashbang was a M16A1 Modified Hand Grenade Simulator which was modified by the LAPD Bomb Squad.

## **Pros and Cons**

NFDDs can be either a lifesaver or a liability. When properly employed, NFDDs are reasonably safe. When improperly employed, they have the potential to cause serious bodily injuries and property damage.

Although NFDDs have proven to be of extremely low lethality over many years of tactical use, several deaths have been at-

tributed to their use.

In 1984, a Los Angeles, California, woman was killed when a flashbang went off between her back and a wall. In 1989, police in Minneapolis, Minnesota, conducted a drug raid at the home of an elderly couple after a bad tip from an informant. The flashbangs used in the raid set the home on fire, resulting in the death of the couple from smoke inhalation.

In 2003, a woman died from a heart attack after police deployed a flashbang at her residence in Harlem, New York.

In 2011, a 28 year veteran Charlotte-Mecklenburg, North Carolina, SWAT officer was killed when a flashbang went off in close proximity to his torso. Also in 2011, a man died in a fire which was apparently sparked by a flashbang deployed through a window during a raid of the home in Greenfield, California.

## **The Courts**

In *Kirk v. Watkins*, the United States Court of Appeal for the 10th Circuit stated that “[t]he use of a flashbang device is neither per se objectively reasonable nor unreasonable. The reasonableness of its use depends on the facts and circumstances of each case.”

In *Boyd v. Benton County, City of Corvallis et al*, the United States Court of Appeal for the 9th Circuit held that the use of a flashbang while executing a warrant may constitute excessive force under the Fourth Amendment. The Court stated, “...given the inherently dangerous nature of the [flashbang] device, it cannot be a reasonable use of force under the Fourth Amendment to throw it ‘blind’ into a room occupied by innocent bystanders absent a strong governmental interest, careful consideration of alternatives and appropriate measures to reduce the risk of injury.”

A sound legally defensible policy and proper training are key to the safe and effective employment of NFDDs. Most of the injuries which occur are the direct result of operator error which can be linked to a failure in training. Proper training not only saves lives, it’s your first line of defense in court.





**A flashbang deflagrates in the basement of a house where Ryan McCandless, a Rapid City, SD, police officer, poses as an armed perpetrator for a special weapons and tactics exercise.**

A municipality may be held liable for a violation of rights which results from a failure to adequately train its employees if that failure represents a deliberate indifference on the part of the municipality.

In *City of Canton, Ohio v. Harris*, the United States Supreme Court stated, "Failure to train may be fairly said to represent a policy for which a municipality is responsible and for which it may be held liable where injury results, if in light of the duties assigned to specific officers, the need for more or different training is so obvious, and the inadequacy so likely to result in the violation of constitutional rights, that the municipality can reasonably said to have been deliberately indifferent."

Although there certainly isn't anything which compares to reality, realism cannot be replicated in a training environment. As such, the goal in training must be realistic simulation. For training to be meaningful, it must be as close to reality as possible.

Standard NFDDs are expensive and impose restrictions on the training environment. In years past, this led to many agencies employing expended flashbangs which were painted or taped blue for recognition during training.

A better option is to employ a training device designed to realistically simulate the characteristics of standard NFDDs. These training devices fall into three categories: inert, pyrotechnic and non-pyrotechnic. They replicate to varying degrees the handling characteristics of operational NFDDs without the cost, blast and regulatory requirements.

### Inert NFDD Training Devices

In the inert category, Ring's Manufacturing ([blueguns.com](http://blueguns.com)), the originator of BLUEGUNS® firearms simulators, makes two BLUEGUNS flashbang simulators – the FSFBTS (a detailed replica of the CTS 7290) and the FSFBT (a detailed replica of the Defense Technology No. 25). Ring's also makes the FSBBG Baseball Grenade which replicates the military M67 fragmentation grenade.

Ring's BLUEGUNS products are made with strong, impact-resistant polyurethane with metal reinforcement. The flashbang simulators are inexpensive and last practically forever. They have a functioning pull pin, but obviously lack any "bang."

### Pyrotechnic NFDD Training Devices

Pyrotechnic NFDD training devices which are presently available in the US fall into two categories: traditional fuzed and Blank-Firing Impact Grenade (BFIG). BFIGs contain a mechanism which is designed to fire a blank cartridge when the device is deployed from a height of about one meter onto a hard surface

Most pyrotechnic training flashbangs are of the fuzed variety. Fuzed training flashbangs typically employ a special M201A1 fuze and produce a 120-130 dB report at five feet (1.5 m). The training fuzes are roughly half the cost of operational flashbangs, typically running around \$15.00, plus the necessary HazMat fee for shipping. The bodies may be used an unlimited number of times; the only recurring costs are for the training fuzes.

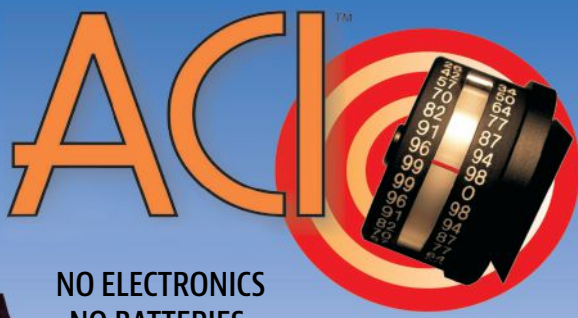
The most widely employed fuzed training flashbang systems are the ALS Less Lethal Systems ([lesslethal.com](http://lesslethal.com)) ALS-DTS Diversionary Device Training System, Combined Systems (CTS) ([combinedsystems.com](http://combinedsystems.com)) Model 7290T and 7290MT Flash-Bang Training Systems and Safariland/Defense Technology ([defense-technology.com](http://defense-technology.com)) Low Roll™ Distraction Device Training Body and Training Fuzes. ALS also manufactures a Sting-Ball Training System and an IED Simulator Training Set.

Except for the special fuze and blue color, the fuzed training flashbangs (and training Sting-Ball) by ALS, CTS and Defense Technology are identical in appearance and weight to the companies' operational flashbangs they are designed to replicate. This makes them very popular with agencies which employ those companies' less-lethal products.

Popular in Europe, Blank Firing Impact Grenades are making

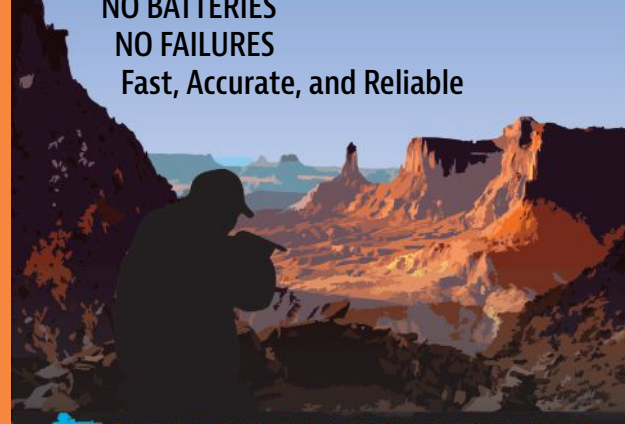


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## FLASHBANG TRAINING OPTIONS: GETTING THE MOST BANG FOR YOUR SWAT TRAINING BUCK

Continued from page 41



**Ring's FS-BCTS is an inert detailed replica of the CTS 7290 Flash-Bang.**

their presence felt in the US tactical community. Two such devices are the ALS TRMR-LE Training Device and Royal Arms International ([royalarms.com](http://royalarms.com)) FBG-MkIII NFDD Flash Bang Trainer.

The ALS TRMR-LE Training Device has a body which can be reloaded up to 250 times with the ALS1208 12-gauge Bore Thunder cartridge. The body of the TRMR-LE incorporates a safety button which must be engaged to twist the top section to arm which functions similarly to a standard firearm safety. Upon deployment, the device's kinetic energy causes the wobble top to move and drive the firing pin into the primer of the cartridge. The TRMR-LE has been safety tested to withstand a ten foot drop (in the safe position).

After deployment, the base is removed to expel the spent cartridge, reloaded and reassembled for the next use. Bore Thunder cartridges produce approximately 172 dB at five feet. The

TRMR-LE can be configured as an irritant/marketing powder dispersal system using a .68 caliber ball, such as a PepperBall from United Tactical Systems (UTS). The TRMR-LE is available in a range of colors (including training blue) to suit different mission profiles.

Royal Arms International's FBG-MkIII NFDD Flash Bang Trainer is based on the company's FBG-MkII with a number of en-

hancements. The FBG-MkIII has a reloadable body designed to be used with Royal Arms 12-gauge FBC Flash Bang Cartridges or standard 209 shotshell primers using the included adapter. The FBG-MkIII is hand deployed in the same manner as a traditional flashbang.

The FBG-MkIII incorporates a pull ring and spoon ("fuze" handle) for safety. It also employs a wobble top which utilizes the kinetic energy from impact to drive the firing pin into the primer. According to Royal Arms, the



**The TRMR-LE Training Device is a reloadable training diversionary device body which can be reloaded up to 250 times with the ALS1208 12-gauge Bore Thunder cartridge.**

FBG-MkIII may be reloaded an unlimited number of times. The FBG-MkIII is available only in black.

The FBC Flash Bang Cartridges produce 175 dB at five feet. The 209 primers produce 118 dB at five feet and are definitely the most cost-effective way to conduct NFDD training, running only around five cents each.



**Royal Arms' FBG-MkIII Flash Bang Training Grenade is a blank firing impact grenade designed for tactical training which can use either special 12-gauge blanks or 209 primers.**

### Non-pyrotechnic Flashbang Simulators

Most of the non-pyrotechnic devices on the market were originally developed for Airsoft and paintball. While some of these do work for training, I recommend going with a training system/device which was specifically developed for tactical training, such as the Defense Tech-

nology Low Roll Training Simulator which is a reloadable pneumatic simulator.

The Low Roll Training Simulator has a pneumatic fuze and does not produce any flame, spark, light, heat, or damage to the deployment environment. It produces 130 dB at five feet and is sold in a complete starter kit containing two bodies, a filling station, end caps, pull rings, and replacement fuze handles.

All of the devices mentioned in this article are loud enough for effective training, but not so loud as to mandate hearing protection (except for the 12-gauge blanks). This makes them ideal for role-playing, scenario-based/force-on-force training. Operators don't need to be subjected to unnecessary hearing damage or overpressure. Plus, training can be conducted in more locations than would be possible with a higher dB output.

To sum it all up, realistic NFDD training has never been more affordable. Today's NFDD training options allow teams to train more often, in more places and with much greater safety than has been the case in the past. **P&SN**

Eugene Nielsen is a private consultant and a former police officer.



**Safariland®/Defense Technology's Low Roll Training Simulator is a non-pyrotechnic pneumatic training device.**

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# Keeping Your AR Running: Magazine Problems and Maintenance

EUGENE NIELSEN



**The magazine is a critical component in any semiautomatic or automatic firearm. A sizable percentage of weapon malfunctions can be attributed to magazine-related issues. This being the case, it is surprising how little attention is paid to this crucial component.**

**C**leaning and maintaining your magazines are just as important as cleaning and maintaining your rifle or selecting the right ammunition. If you get a magazine malfunction, test it again. If it creates a second malfunction, immediately take it out of duty until the problem can be ascertained and remedied or use the magazine for training purposes only. The best option, of course, is to simply get a new magazine. Lives depend on it.

Failures to feed are commonly caused by a weak magazine spring or a bound

follower. The use of self-leveling/anti-tilt followers helps resolve follower issues, as will keeping your magazines clean.

USGI magazines with the old black USGI followers should not be used for duty, as the US military has taken them out of service. The military considers the green USGI followers to be strong performers and acceptable as long as they are serviceable, but non-tilt followers are best. The new blue-grey Enhanced Performance Magazine (EPM) USGI followers; the tan USGI followers which preceded it; or Magpul® Enhanced Self-Leveling followers feature a non-tilt follower.

It is important to emphasize that the above comments on black USGI followers do NOT apply to the proprietary patent pending black followers employed in SureFire® High-Capacity Magazines. SureFire followers are totally different from the followers used in USGI 30 round magazines.

Fatigued springs need to be replaced to make a magazine serviceable. Chrome Silicon (CS) springs will provide longer duty cycle life than Stainless Steel (SS) springs.

## Double Feeds

Double feeds may be caused by either a dirty or weak extractor or magazine feed lip separation. When feed lips are wider than the factory spec, they can cause double feeds, including the dreaded bolt override malfunction. Failure of a magazine to drop

free from the magazine well is another sign that the feed lips may be out of spec.

What many refer to as a double feed is, in actuality, a failure to eject. Correction can be as simple as replacing the magazine spring with a new one; cleaning the shellac or polymer deposited from all those cheap steel shell cases; or, in rare cases, replacing the ejector spring. Most often, proper cleaning will remedy the extraction ejection issues.

There are a number of other conditions which can cause short stroking and the same type of jam. Poor gas pressure or short duration may allow the bolt to extract and eject a fired case, but the bolt doesn't travel back far enough to pick up the rear of the case head. This is evident when the fired case just barely clears the ejection port and the fresh case has an indent in the case body and the bullet nose is partially forward of the front edge of the magazine or may even be pushed into the feed ramp slightly. Correction for this could be replacement gas rings or replacement of the adjustable gas block/adjustable gas tube. Fired cases should eject forcefully from the ejection port and thoroughly irritate the shooter in the next position to the right (left for a properly built left-hand AR).

A true double feed occurs when one feed lip is bent up on the right or left side and will occur with every other round. This is fairly easy to detect and correct by simply noting which side the next round is po-





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## KEEPING YOUR AR RUNNING: MAGAZINE PROBLEMS AND MAINTENANCE

Continued from page 44



**The use of a loader, such as the Butler Creek ASAP Universal AR-15/M16 Mag Loader, not only helps to take the chore out of loading, but eliminates wear and damage to magazine feed lips from the loading process.**

sitioned and whether or not a jam occurs after the first or second shot from the bent side.

If both feed lips are bent up, it will most often occur with each shot and both will

need adjustment. This condition exists in poorly or non-heat-treated aluminum magazines and most steel magazines because the manufacturers rely on the inherent strength of the steel rather than using higher carbon content. Checking feed lips for dents, dings, cracks, or damage is easy enough, but also often neglected.

Magazines should also be routinely examined for wear or damage. One flawed test is to half load a magazine (15 rounds in a 30 round magazine) and smack the base on a hard surface to see if a round pops out in order to determine if the feed lips are spread and/or the magazine spring is weak. This is not a good indicator, as all magazines will release tension on the top rounds, allowing one or more rounds to pop out when tested in this manner.

Cracked feed lips can occur if a fully loaded polymer magazine is dropped from weapon height onto a hard surface and has the misfortune of landing on the feed lips. You're also not entirely safe with aluminum USGI magazines. The feed lips on USGI aluminum magazines may not crack, but will bend under similar circumstances.

The US Army at Picatinny Arsenal in

New Jersey has developed and patented a go/no-go feed lip gauge which allows anyone to quickly and accurately check for the correct maximum and minimum clearance tolerances of a magazine's feed lips. The specs for a magazine feed lip's clearance are: Go .454"; No-go .476". Trying to gauge that visually with any degree of accuracy without a tool is difficult, at best.

### Tools

The Army feed lip gauge has been licensed for manufacture and is now available from Brownells. The Brownells AR-15/M16 Feed Lip Gauge (080-000-744WB) may be used on any STANAG-compliant magazine, whether metal or polymer. For those of you using Magpul PMAG®s, it should be noted that PMAG dustcovers double as a go/no-go gauge for PMAGs. Using a go/no-go gauge eliminates all guesswork.

To use the Brownells Feed Lip Gauge, you either disassemble the magazine and remove the follower and spring or push the follower away from the feed lip. You slip the gauge over the magazine from the top and lightly press the gauge between the

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**Brownells' AR-15/M16 Magazine Feed Lip Gauge lets you quickly and accurately check for correct feed lip gap.**

magazine feed lips. Use care not to apply pressure to the sides of the magazine while testing. If the gauge passes completely through the feed lips, the gap is too wide. If the gauge won't pass at all through the feed lips, the gap is too narrow.

If the feed lips are out of spec, either discard the magazine or, in the case of aluminum magazines, use Brownells Magazine Feed Lip Tool (080-000-314WB), which is available separately, to bend the lips back into spec. Trying to do this with pliers can result in unrepairable damage to the magazine.

The Feed Lip Tool will help get extra life out of otherwise unserviceable magazines. Feed lips can develop cracks, so proceed carefully. Magazines with reconditioned feed lips need to be clearly marked and consigned to training/range use only. I mark mine with a big "T." There will be metal fatigue in bent feed lips. Never use them for duty.

The use of a magazine loading/unloading tool will not only save time and your thumb, but, more importantly, it will eliminate stress and wear to the feed lips from loading and unloading magazines, lengthening the service life of the magazine. There are a number of excellent loaders on the market. Some also double as unloading tools. You can also use the stan-



**Brownells' Magazine Feed Lip Tool is designed to be used to bend out of spec feed lips back into spec. Trying to do this with pliers can result in permanent damage to the magazine.**

dard USGI stripper clip guide.

Magpul Enhanced Self-Leveling followers are a drop-in replacement for the USGI black or green followers. They are available separately in three packs in your choice of green or yellow. USGI magazines with tan followers employ a proprietary spring which attaches in the middle of the follower and cannot be used with standard springs.

## Disassembly

Magazines will need to be periodically disassembled for cleaning and further inspection. It's important not to overdo this as routine disassembly will cause unnecessary wear. Magazines don't need to be cleaned after every range session. After a high amount of shooting or exposure to the elements or dirt and dust, cleaning is recommended. Disassembly of the USGI aluminum magazines is a simple procedure, but doing it improperly can cause damage.

The stamped floor plate on USGI magazines needs to be removed. There are several ways to do this. You can either slide a flat screwdriver beneath the tab front edge of the floor plate and the magazine body and pry the floor plate forward or

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## KEEPING YOUR AR RUNNING: MAGAZINE PROBLEMS AND MAINTENANCE

Continued from page 47



**Magpul®'s PMAG® D60® eliminates problems associated with many drum mags.**

insert a cleaning rod, a small punch or the tip of a cartridge into the drain hole on the floor plate and flex the floor plate slightly downward and forward. Do NOT pry the floor plate tabs off the bottom as they will break. Slide the floor plate off and work the spring and follower out of the bottom. The follower may take a little effort to remove.

With the spring and follower removed, run a dry cloth through the magazine body several times. You can use a toothbrush to scrub the inside of the body.

The spring and follower should be carefully examined for signs of wear or damage. All magazine springs will fatigue over time. Compare the spring to a new spring or a spring which is known to be good. If the old spring shows signs of fatigue or it is noticeably shorter, it's time to replace it or discard the magazine.

When examining the follower, pay particular attention to any signs of chipping or

cracking of the follower. Any loose chips in the magazine body are a sure indicator of follower damage.

If a magazine has worn or damaged parts, either discard the magazine or replace the parts and use the magazine exclusively for training. Training only magazines must be clearly marked to prevent them from being mistaken for a duty magazine.

Do not lubricate or leave any oils or lubrication inside the magazine or its components. Not only is it unnecessary, it will become a dirt magnet. I just wipe them down with a silicone cloth. Reassembly is in reverse order; just remember to insert the spring in any hole provided in the follower to ensure proper travel and pressure. After re-assembly, test the magazine by loading a dummy round and make certain that it feeds properly and the bolt locks back. Better yet, take the magazine to the range and test it with a little range practice.

There are numerous polymer magazines for the AR-15/M16 on the market. Disassembly methods will vary, but most are designed for easy disassembly and cleaning. In general, they require less cleaning and maintenance than aluminum USGI magazines.

Disassembly and maintenance of a SureFire High-Capacity Magazine is similar to conventional USGI aluminum magazines. SureFire magazines employ a 4x2 quad-stack configuration. They are constructed of hard M-Spec 6000 series



**Magpul® PMAG® dustcovers double as a go/no-go gauge for PMAGs.**

aluminum and feature a nonbinding internal coil spring and proprietary nesting polymer follower system. The springs are cadmium coated and can be kept loaded for extended periods without magazine spring fatigue.

While SureFire High Capacity Magazines are STANAG 4179 compliant, they are designed specifically for the M4/M16 and AR-15 variants. SureFire warns that they may not function in some variants, such as the HK® 416/M27/MR556.

### Drum Mags

Drum magazines are complex. They are generally difficult to take apart and clean in the field. Many require special powder lubricants and are not designed to remain loaded for long periods. They are also bulkier than box magazines, although the drum configuration makes the height manageable and allows for prone firing and easier storage.

The combat proven Magpul PMAG D60® drum magazine does not have the issues which have plagued many drum magazines. It has wide compatibility with most STANAG 4179 magazine compliant weapons, including the 416/M27/MR556 and IWI Tavor® series.

The D60 features easy disassembly for cleaning with only a flat bladed screwdriver or similar tool. It is equipped with a ratcheting loading lever to take tension off the spring for easy hand loading. The feed tower on the D60 is compatible with most loading devices, including USGI stripper clips and guides.

You should mark all of your magazines with your initials or with an individual magazine identifier so that you can tell them apart. AR mags should be thought of as a disposable commodity. I am sure you will agree that your life and the lives of others are worth more than the price of a new magazine. **P&N**

Eugene Nielsen is a private consultant and a former police officer.



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# BUSTED!

JAMES L. MCCLINTON, PH.D

**Make sure to check the VIN number on that vehicle...** In Ohio, police are searching for two men who fled a traffic stop involving an Amish buggy. A deputy in Trumbull County reported seeing two Amish men drinking as they rode on the back of the buggy. When the officer spotted a 12-pack of Michelob ULTRA® inside, he tried to get the driver to stop. The men jumped out and ran off into the woods while the horse continued to pull the buggy before eventually stopping. The deputy found several open containers of alcohol and a "radio sound system" which included several large speakers. The buggy was towed and the horse is being cared for by a nearby resident until someone claims the animal. *(On a positive note, they had a "self-driving vehicle.")*

**This is so ridiculous that it's criminal. Oops, I mean "justice-involved"...** Ever sensitive San Francisco is giving ex-cons, juvenile delinquents and drug addicts new monikers, thanks to the Board of Supervisors' new "person-first" language guidelines. For example, someone just released from prison will be a "justice-involved person"; a repeat offender will be a "returning resident." People on probation will be "persons under supervision." The under 18 criminal crowd will be known as "young people impacted by the juvenile justice system." Words such as "convict" and "inmate" "only serve to obstruct and separate people from society and make the institutionalization of racism and supremacy appear normal," the board's resolution reads. *(Yeah, and the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake was a "community remodeling project.")*

**Wait a minute – that's not dandruff!...** In Madrid, Spain, customs officials were doing their job of checking passengers on an inbound flight from Bogota, Colombia. An inspector noticed that one of the passengers had an unusual hairstyle. The man's coiffure was a very tall pompadour, something like you would have seen on a young version of Elvis. The inspector investigated the matter and found that it was not the man's real hair, but a toupee. The wearer was not trying to cover up a bald spot, but was instead covering a half kilo of cocaine which he had glued to his head. Customs reported that the traveler was trying to hide \$34,000 worth of cocaine under a wig. *(Hair today, jail tomorrow.)*

## REAL STORIES OF GENUINE ABSURDITY



**Maybe he should change his phone number to 867-5309...**

In California, a man came up with a brilliant idea to hide his car from license plate readers and ticketing systems: registering the vanity license plate "NULL." He hoped his NULL license plates would make it impossible for cops to give him a ticket, since they wouldn't be able to enter the ticket into their system. His plan worked all too well. It caused a citation processing center to send him \$18,000 worth of parking tickets. When a ticket is entered into the system for a car with unknown license plates, the field on the form reads "NULL." Since there was suddenly a car registered with those exact plates, \$12,000 worth of unpaid tickets all got mailed to him. The DMV eventually dismissed the fines, but since he's still using those plates, he has already amassed another \$6,000 worth of other peoples' tickets. *(Play stupid games; win stupid prizes.)*

**He should be sentenced to wear mittens in public...** A Pennsylvania state appellate court has ruled against a man who was convicted in a lower court for disorderly conduct in 2018 for pointing his finger like a gun at a neighbor. Earlier that year, the man was reportedly walking past a neighbor's home in Manor, Pennsylvania, when the neighbor made an obscene gesture with his hand. He responded by making a shooting gun gesture with his own hand. A witness called 911 and the unnamed neighbor told police he felt "extremely threatened." The man argued that his gesture was not a hazard, but the appeals court disagreed. *(I guess the exploding fist bomb is now considered a threat of terrorism.)*

**As he was being processed, the arrestee was overheard asking if the bail bondsman would take cash...** A trash collector in Limestone County, Alabama, noticed something unusual in a trash pickup outside a man's residence. The large trash bags were filled with printed paper. The garbage man took a closer look and found the sheets of paper were actually printed \$20 bills. The resident of the home apparently intended to run a counterfeiting operation and had conducted a test to get his fake bills just right. The bags were turned over to the police who discovered that the man was also somewhat of a recycler. One of the fake bills was printed on the back of an Alabama Pardons and Paroles receipt issued three months earlier. Police booked him on felony counterfeiting charges. *(Does Limestone County mandate clear garbage bags?)*

**Where was she when I was in school?...** In Evans, Louisiana, a 52-year-old woman was charged with filing false public records after it was discovered that she was writing fake doctor's notes for high school students so they could get out of class. The woman, who worked at a medical clinic, charged \$20 for each excuse, according to the Vernon Parish Sheriff. He also said it was common knowledge among students that the excuses were for sale. The woman's fraud came to light when someone from the Vernon Parish School Board called a doctor about the notes which he denied having authorized. *(School authorities should have known something was amiss when all the notes were signed by Dr. Phil Goode.)*

**Now we know who flung poo...** A 49-year-old Oregon man who targeted his former friend with an improvised dog poop bomb avoided prison and was sentenced to three years of probation. He admitted to filling a plastic toolbox with dog feces and timing it to explode when the victim opened it. He put the device on the back of a Camaro owned by a former buddy. When it exploded, it sounded "like an M-80 going off and the dog doo was blown out of the toolbox," investigators said. The friend wasn't hurt. The pair had a falling out when the accused believed the friend had no intention of giving back some tools he borrowed. *(Nothing says "give me back my stuff!" like an exploding toolbox full of dog doody.)* **P&SN**






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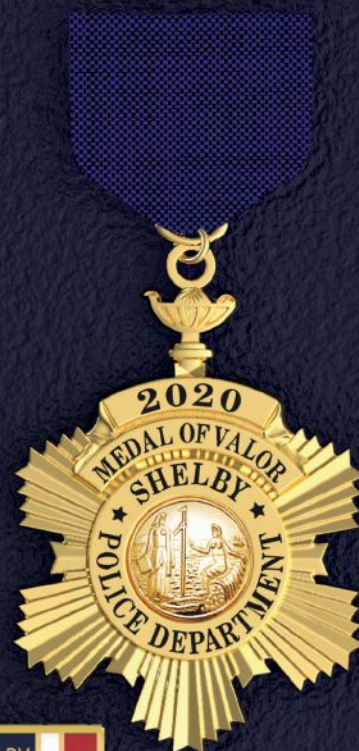
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