

OpTac International News Bulletin

Criminal Indictments and Deadly Discharges

Law enforcement officers are exposed to dangerous and potentially deadly confrontations in the performance of their assignments. As such, operations-related training is essential to establishing a foundation for safe and effective deployments. However, all training must include mandatory safety standards and protocols to protect officers from unnecessary exposure to harm during these vital sessions.

This edition of the **OpTac International News Bulletin** presents the importance of establishing (and following) Training Safety Standards and Protocols, and their corresponding impact on officer safety. Last week, a Pennsylvania State Police Corporal was criminally indicted on five counts of reckless endangerment in the accidental shooting death of a fellow trooper.

The Corporal pulled the trigger of his firearm as he discussed the weapon's trigger mechanism, shooting the trooper in the chest. Four other troopers were present while attending a state police Glock .45 to Sig Sauer .45 caliber handgun transition class. Prosecutors had also been seeking (but did not receive) grand jury indictments on homicide and involuntary manslaughter charges.

In obtaining the indictments Montgomery County District Attorney Risa Vetri Ferman stated: "[The Corporal] breached routine, yet critical, safety protocol by failing to visually and physically check to ensure his weapon was unloaded, failing to obtain confirmation from another that his firearm was not loaded, and failing to point his weapon away from the direction of everyone present (including [the trooper])."

Ferman's office further commented on the grand jury indictment: "The grand jury concluded that although [the Corporal] is an experienced officer and highly qualified firearms instructor who is very familiar with generally accepted safety procedures, he did not follow necessary precautions during the September 30th [2014] training."

Tragic incidents such as this one, continue to occur at an alarming rate and profoundly impact everyone involved, along with their law enforcement agencies. Training safety standards must be implemented *and* have mandatory compliance by all personnel present during a training session, regardless of rank, seniority, position (instructor or student), and assigned unit.

The "OpTac International Training Safety Standards and Protocols" were developed in an attempt to eliminate, or at least minimize the occurrence of these needless deaths. Click here for your complimentary copy of this updated document: [Training Safety Standards and Protocols](#).