

## OpTac International News Bulletin:

### Deadly Discharges

OpTac International, Inc. provides professional program and consultation services to law enforcement, military, and counter-terrorist team personnel worldwide. 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.

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 establish 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 vitally important sessions. OpTac International coined the term "deadly discharge" to denote the severity of events in which an officer is inadvertently shot, instead of the more common usage of "accidental" or "negligent" discharge.

The following are a few examples of training-related shootings and/or event outcomes that have occurred thus far in 2019:

1. Ft. Wayne, IN (March) - Two SWAT officers were shot by one round that discharged from an officer's weapon at a police academy indoor firearms range
2. Jonesboro, Arkansas (April) - A police K-9 was shot by a police officer at a firing range
3. Charleston, South Carolina (April) - A police officer was shot by another officer at a firing range
4. Morris County, New Jersey (May) - A police officer shot himself in the leg during training at a police firearms range
5. Doral, Florida (June) - A police sergeant was shot by a fellow officer during a training exercise
6. Baltimore, Maryland (October) - The Baltimore City Police Department settled a lawsuit for \$8 million that resulted from an officer who was shot in the head by a police academy instructor during training
7. Punta Gorda, Florida (October) - A Punta Gorda police officer who shot and killed a 72-year old woman while she was role-playing during a training exercise plead

no contest to second degree manslaughter. His sentence includes 10 years of probation, but no time in prison. "The former police chief was fired after the City of Punta Gorda investigated and found his officers did not consistently follow standard safety protocols when conducting citizen training programs" (mysuncoast.com, 2019).

Tragic incidents such as these, 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 incidents, which often result in death. Click on the following link for your complimentary copy of this updated document in our Officer Safety Section: <http://optacinternational.com/officer-safety/>.