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OpTac International Training Safety Standards and Protocol

- The dispatch center of the jurisdiction where training is to be conducted will be notified prior to the start of any scenario or training exercise. If neighboring law enforcement jurisdictions are in close proximity or could reasonably be expected to come in contact with the training/scenario site, then their dispatch centers will be contacted as well.
- Whenever possible, “Police Training In Progress” signs will be placed on access roads at the scenario site.
- Designate a safety vehicle equipped with a mobile telephone to be parked at the training location.
- A minimum of two people are assigned as safety officers. Additional safety officers may be assigned depending on the total number of personnel to be trained.
- The safety officers have overlapping responsibilities with both being required to conduct separate weapons and ammunition checks of all participants.
- All participants are advised that they are safety officers as well. Any unsafe act must be reported immediately. Participants also have the authority to halt the training exercise to address any concerns.
- Participants must wear and carry all necessary operational gear with them at all times (except live ammunition unless instructed).
- Participants are advised to keep their fingers off of the trigger and outside the trigger guard unless preparing to fire. They must also be aware of proper target identification and backdrop.
- Officers arriving late, or leave and later return to the training/scenario may not participate.
- The inspection process is conducted again in its entirety if a break is taken during the training.
- Participants and observers line up in a safe direction and unload all weapons prior to the commencement of training exercises/scenarios.
- Participants must present ALL weapons to instructors/safety officers for visual and physical inspection. Three instructors/safety officers are responsible for conducting this safety check. If there are only two designated safety officers present, then one participant will be a designated safety officer to assist in conducting this weapons check. Live ammunition must not be present in any weapon, gear, pocket, bag, or other equipment used by the participants unless a live-fire exercise is being conducted.
- Record serial numbers of all weapons to be used in the training session, after they have been checked for live ammunition.
- Vehicles, when used as part of a training exercise, must be checked for live ammunition. Access must be restricted to any area where live ammunition could be present.

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- If live-fire training is being conducted, instructors/safety officers visually and physically inspect ALL weapons. Instructions are given to the participants to wait for the specific command to load and fire their weapons. They are again instructed to ensure proper target identification and backdrop before discharging their weapons. All training areas must be cleared of personnel who may have inadvertently entered a danger zone prior to beginning an exercise. Ballistic vests and helmets must be worn at all times by participants and safety officers (except for exercises conducted exclusively for snipers).
- Live-fire areas must be cleared of personnel prior to the commencement of training for shoot-house exercises. Instructors should position themselves in a designated safe location or directly behind the participants. They must have direct voice contact with the participants. Participants are instructed not to inadvertently point their weapons at teammates in front of them or to turn around with their weapons in hand. Any targets missed and subsequently observed may not be engaged once an area has been passed.
- Officers/trainees are not permitted to fire alone on the range (for formal training sessions only). At least one safety officer or instructor must be within view and voice contact of any officer/trainee conducting live-fire training on the range.
- Officers/trainees are prohibited from sighting-in instructors acting as spotters/suspects down range during stalking exercises in which blank rounds are used. Targets will be posted in the area where the spotters/suspects are located for officers/trainees to sight-in and engage. Anyone observed sighting-in a spotter/suspect will be removed from the training and be subject to disciplinary action.
- When blank rounds are used, one round is fired to demonstrate the degree of force discharged from the weapon. Participants are instructed to ensure their weapons are not pointed directly at anyone within 20 feet.
- When simulated ammunition is used, a demonstration of the impact after being discharged from the weapon is conducted. Participants are instructed to only fire sufficient rounds to stop the threat. Participants and safety officers must wear eye protection and have all exposed skin covered with clothing. Groin protection such as an athletic cup or thick towel must be used for males, as well as females.
- A roll call of participants and instructors will occur when returning from target areas on the range during night-fire exercises. Safety officers must also check the areas to ensure that no one has been left behind.
- At the conclusion of the training day, officers will reload their duty handguns in a safe direction before leaving the training site.

Safety standards and protocols must be enacted prior to conducting any training. The above recommendations are designed to promote safe weapons handling while conducting realistic training. For further information please contact OpTac International, Inc.