



# CIVIL Unrest

# CONTENTS

## POLICE MAGAZINE SPECIAL REPORT: Civil Unrest



### 4 Non-Lethal Weapons and Civil Unrest

It's important for law enforcement agencies to have developed plans for what tool will be used and when if a protest becomes a violent disturbance.

**Dave Young**

### 8 Beyond the Mobile Field Force

Specially trained and equipped public order teams have proven to be effective in quelling rioters while ensuring the right of citizens to peacefully protest.

**Geoff Perrin**

### 13 Body-Worn Cameras at Civil Disturbances

The use of body-worn cameras in public order operations is complicated.

**David Griffith**



### 14 The Making of a Public Order Team

After the Freddie Gray riots in Baltimore, the Maryland State Police updated its civil unrest response unit's organization, training, equipment, and tactics.

**David Griffith**

### 16 Bicycles for Crowd Control

A well-tuned, properly trained bicycle unit can effectively manage mass gatherings of people.

**Christian Bailey**

### 18 Directory

### 19 Product Showcase

Ad Index	Page	Free Info #
Avon Protection Systems	7	761955
Less Lethal Concepts	13	763010
Mission Less Lethal Technologies	3	761957
Panasonic Corporation	11	760030
Propper International	20	763045

# Non-Lethal Weapons and Civil Unrest



IT'S IMPORTANT FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES TO HAVE DEVELOPED PLANS FOR WHAT TOOL WILL BE USED AND WHEN IF A PROTEST BECOMES A VIOLENT DISTURBANCE.

DAVE YOUNG

**O**ne of the best force multipliers for agencies responding to small or large disturbances involving civil unrest is the use of non-lethal tools, including aerosols and munitions.

Non-lethal weapons are both a visual and physical deterrent. Almost everyone has a fear of having weapons pointed at them, and in many situations this fear of the unknown can get people to back down, which assists agencies in maintaining the peace.

Understanding the psychological effects of just showing non-lethal weapon systems in the hands of officers can help an agency to apply non-escalation and de-escalation strategies before the actual deployment of these systems becomes necessary.

## DETERRENCE

The placement of non-lethal weapons operators in a formation of officers is important. There have always been psychological effects of seeing a shotgun or a 37mm or 40mm launcher on a riot line. These non-lethal weapons tend to earn the respect of everyone who sees them.

Non-lethal aerosols and munitions give agencies the ability to reach out into a crowd and apply force when necessary at ranges as far away as 100 yards and as close as 10 feet. This lets officers neutralize violent actors even when they are mixed among lawful protesters.

## PHYSICAL EFFECTS

Even though non-lethal weapons are not intended to kill, they can have serious and dangerous effects. So it's important that

officers know what these tools can do.

Using non-lethal weapons to deploy chemical or specialty impact munitions can cause physiological effects. These include respiratory distress, impaired vision, and blunt force trauma that can create muscular dysfunction.

Impact munitions can also cause physical bruising and possible penetration. The likelihood of these injuries can be affected by many factors such as the distance from the subject, age of the subject, height and weight of the subject, and the clothing worn by the subject.

## ZONES OF EFFECTIVENESS

Each non-lethal weapon that agencies can deploy, whether it is a chemical or specialty impact munition, is designed for a specific mission. And its effectiveness in accomplishing that mission is often affected by the distance to the target. The distance from the deploying officers to the target is also important in establishing justification for using it.

It's common practice to categorize the deployment ranges into zones of effectiveness, starting with 10 feet from the riot line and then extending outward from the line at 50-foot intervals.

Here's a look at what is happening in each of the zones.

### Zone 1—Immediate Threat

There is only 0 to 10 feet between the police line and the protesters. Due to the close distance to the protesters, the officers on the front line have little time to react to an attack and a very limited field of view.



PHOTO: @ZUMA PRESS

### **Zone 2—Potential Threat**

There is now 10 to 50 feet between the police line and the protesters. This gives the officers on the front line more time to react and a greater field of view. However, at this distance the protesters are still close enough to throw objects and physically engage the front line.

### **Zone 3—Possible Threat**

There is now 50 to 100 feet between the police line and the protesters. This distance provides the officers on the front line with a reasonable field of vision and enough time to react to an attack. They can also communicate with the protesters using speakers and other technology.

### **Zone 4—Moderate Threat**

There is 100 to 150 feet between the police and the protesters. Even though the protesters are as much as half a football field from the police line, there is still a moderate level of threat to the officers in the line and other protesters in the area if someone in the crowd decides to commit a violent act.

### **Zone 5—Unlikely Threat**

There is 150 to 200 feet between the police line and the protesters. At this distance, officers in the police line have a greater reactionary time to identify possible dangers and a broad field of view for spotting potential threats.

## **EFFECTIVE AND SAFE RANGE**

Factory warnings from non-lethal weapon manufacturers should always be followed. Many manufacturers will state on their munitions that they are not intended to be fired directly at

the target. Failure to heed this warning can cause severe injury. This is especially true if officers use the product outside the distances specified by the manufacturer.

The weapon delivery zones the manufacturers specify are provided as a guide for agencies in selecting their non-lethal weapon options and to assist officers. This does not mean you cannot deploy these non-lethal munitions closer. However, the specified minimum and maximum ranges are the distances experts have determined will yield the optimum level of psychological and physiological effectiveness upon the subject with an acceptable level of safety.

## **USING FORCE**

Force options are the ability to use verbalization skills and physical alternatives

- Non-escalation methods are options used when establishing contact with the crowd.
- De-escalation strategies are used when the initial contact with the protesters escalates from contact to conflict.
- Disengagement tactics are used when the crowd is unable to be managed effectively within the assembled officers' capabilities.
- Stabilization and/or control techniques are used when the police line is unable to disengage from the protesters and the show of organized force formations and verbalization skills are still effective.
- Escalation tactics such as the deployment of non-lethal weapons are used when the police line is unable to disengage from protesters and the show of organized formations and verbalization skills become ineffective.
- Deadly force is the final option. It is used only when officers or civilians are in immediate danger of death or serious injury from violent subjects.

## **FORCE OPTIONS**

Presence (formations) is the show of organized force through formations and is the first step toward non-escalation methods to communicate with the crowd. A group of officers is called a line formation when the officers are standing side by side. The echelon right or left formation is when officers stand in a 45-degree diagonal to the crowd. The wedge formation is officers in a V-shaped alignment or in a diamond alignment, and it is used to rescue officers or others in danger by inserting a group of officers into the crowd.

Verbalization is precision word choice used in a crowd to promote cooperation, create collaboration, or gain compliance in managing the overall safety of the officers and protesters.

Other force options include:

- Empty hands

And non-lethal weapons and munitions, including:

Riot shields that provide a temporary barrier between the officers and the protesters. Constructed of various transparent plastics, riot shields range in size from 36 to 48 inches in length and are rectangular or circular. Some can be locked together to reinforce the line. They can be used not just to protect officers but also to push the crowd away.

Chemical aerosols are designed to affect subjects emotion-

# Non-Lethal Weapons and Civil Unrest

ally, mentally, and physiologically. They make it difficult for the subject to breathe, impair vision, and cause skin irritation. Chemical aerosols are available in a variety of sizes ranging from a small hand-held canister consisting of approximately 60 psi to a fire extinguisher sized canister that is pressurized to over 250 psi and can deliver a wide area spray of chemical aerosol into a crowd.



PHOTO: POLICEFILE

deployment in confined spaces.

Air launched projectiles are designed to affect the target emotionally, mentally, and physiologically by delivering blunt force trauma and chemical in a liquid or powder. They produce pain and chemical effects.

Muzzle blast munitions are designed to affect the subject's breathing, offering a quick recovery time once the subjects leave the area where the muzzle blast munitions

were deployed from 37mm or 40mm launchers or 12-gauge shotguns. The munitions can deliver chemicals, including OC, CS, and/or CN, they can be impact munitions that deliver blunt force trauma and pain, or they can deliver both impact and chemicals.

Impact munitions such as foam baton rounds, rubber pellet rounds, single rubber ball rounds, and rubber baton rounds are deployed from 12-gauge shotguns or 37mm/40mm launchers and deliver impact and blunt force. They are available in black or smokeless powder cartridges.

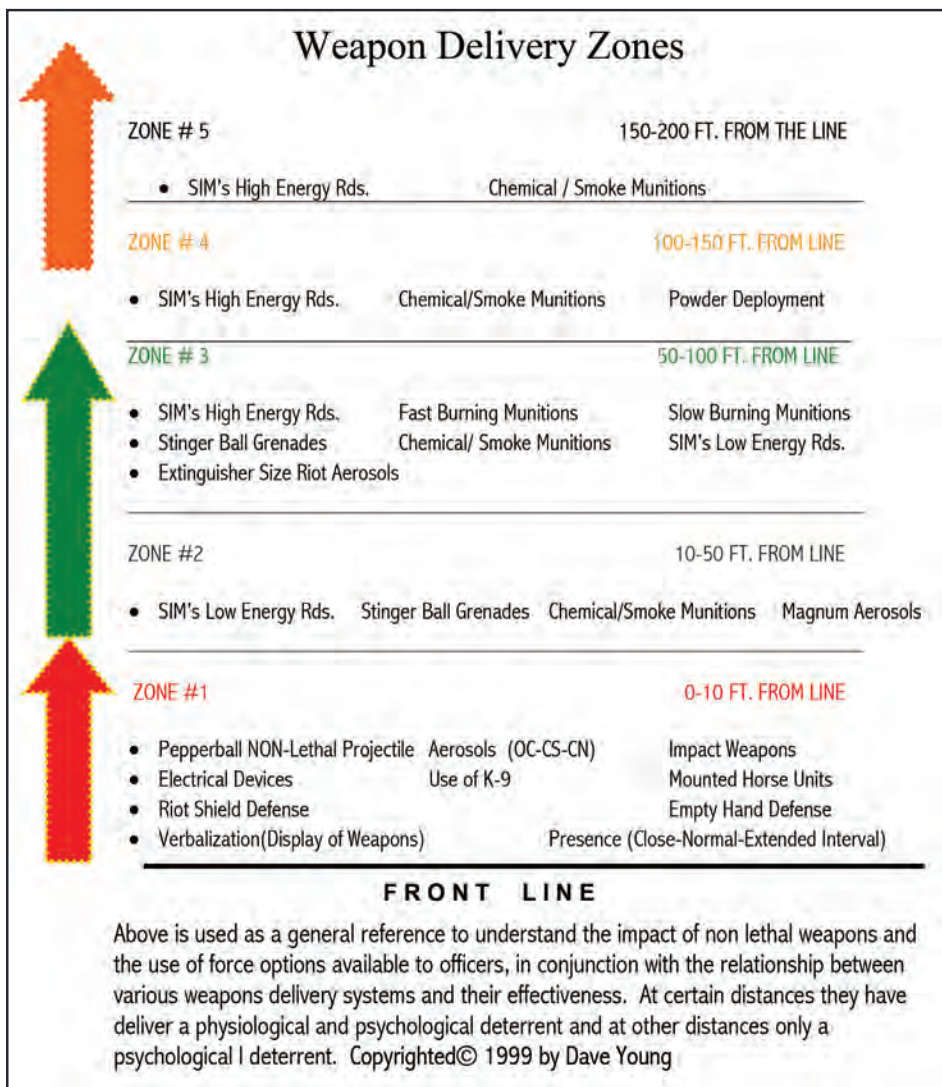
Bean bags are also deployed in 12-gauge or 37mm/40mm launchers. They consist of buckshot in a single canvas bag shaped like a sock. Some bean bags have tails to assist in stabilizing flight to target, increasing their effective point of aim point of impact.

Electrical immobilization systems are shock shields made of plastic that deliver a moderate pulse of electricity to force attackers to back off and electronic control weapons such as TASERS.

Non-lethal grenades are hand-deployed or launcher-deployed munitions designed to offer the user a quick and accurate deployment of chemical agents. Grenades have the ability to reach out up to 100 yards and more and can deliver a quick release of smoke, CS, CN, or a combination of powder and rubber pellets. They can also just be noise devices that can be used to quickly clear an area. ⊕

- The chemicals in these aerosols include:
- Oleoresin capsicum (OC), which is an inflammatory
  - Chlorobenzalmalononitrile (CS), an irritant
  - Chloracetophenone (CN) a lachrymatory (tear gas)

The systems that deliver these chemicals can project a stream at a distance to a single target, a cone or fogger to engage a target area, or a foam or gel to effect a close-up target for



It's common practice to categorize the deployment ranges of non-lethal weapons into zones of effectiveness. This aids officers in deciding which weapons to use in different situations.

*Dave Young is the founder of Arma Training (www.armatraining.com). He has over 30 years of training and experience in law enforcement and corrections and is a veteran of the United States Marine Corps.*

# Beyond the Mobile

**IN THE LAST FEW YEARS**, law enforcement agencies in the United States have dealt with more civil unrest than they have seen in decades. Since 2008, we've seen the Occupy movement, Black Lives Matter, and a number of other activist groups take to the streets in protests, protests that can turn violent. This has been a shock to American law enforcement officers who since the end of the anti-Vietnam War era have been more likely to experience sports-related riots than political unrest.

So now American officers are facing a new era of protest, but agencies are still using tactics and methods and training their officers to the standards of 40 or more years ago. I submit to you that the time has come for change in how American officers respond to protests and riots, and that you could learn a lot from your colleagues across the Atlantic.

Before I explain exactly what you can learn from the experiences of your colleagues in the United Kingdom and Europe, let me say that the current mobile field force model of response here in the U.S. is dated and needs to evolve, but it still can provide a foundation that you can build upon.

The current basic riot response has often been used as a broad and sweeping response to generically resolve civil unrest issues in cities and towns in the U.S. However, it's important to note that not all protests turn into unrest.

Every law enforcement officer in the United States swears to uphold the U.S. Constitution, which is a great thing. The First Amendment of the Constitution allows Americans to speak out and peacefully assemble and protest and that right must be supported and safeguarded by law enforcement. Sadly, the tactics used by American law enforcement in response to some of the protests that have happened over the past few years have clouded the lines on how we treat violent offenders and peaceful protesters.

**SPECIALLY TRAINED  
AND EQUIPPED  
PUBLIC ORDER TEAMS  
HAVE PROVEN TO  
BE EFFECTIVE IN  
QUELLING RIOTERS  
WHILE ENSURING THE  
RIGHT OF CITIZENS TO  
PEACEFULLY PROTEST.**

It's important that law enforcement response to riots single out the rioters and not trample on the rights of lawful protesters. So we have to be very careful and cautious when using force in a crowd. Knowing how to respond properly is a matter of training.

## THE HYBRID MODEL

**T**he first thing to consider when setting up a training program to build a civil unrest response team is to select the right people for the job. Not every officer makes a great public order officer, just as not every officer is capable of being a SWAT officer. Everyone has strengths and weaknesses, and will react differently under

varying stresses or situations.

Once you have the right people, you need to give them solid training. Public order training needs to not only cover passive crowd control, but also needs to take officers out of their "comfortable bubble" so they will be able to deal with extreme and violent disorder in the correct manner.

Training on how to respond to passive crowds needs to move away from the umbrella approach of "Helmets On, Sticks Out, Step and Drag movement" and instead needs to get back to training officers to stand the line in their patrol uniforms communicating individually and interacting with the crowd. It's important that public order officers be trained to see crowds not as a pack or a tribe but groups of individuals, each person having unique attitudes and intentions.

Because public order events can roll over into a number of endless hours and can be physically and mentally draining, agencies need to have enough personnel either on their own or through mutual aid agreements to keep the

Specialized public order vehicles carry officers and their equipment to sites where crowd control is needed.



PHOTOS: GEOFF FERRIN

# Field Force

GEOFF PERRIN



U.S. Park Police public order team officers train in all weather conditions, both night and day.

peace. Not all of these officers need to be nor should be trained to the same level. Basic and advanced training standards should also be set up and adopted.

The basic level of mobile field force (MFF) training has been offered for more than 40 years. But now some law enforcement departments have taken it upon themselves to search out alternative advanced public order methods, equipment, and standards.

These departments and their leaders have looked outside of the box and beyond their egos to explore other global training options. A number of these departments have looked at British and European models, which have been created and refined through vast experience. They are now adopting a hybrid British, Northern Irish, German, and American model.

This includes high standards of equipment to mitigate the risks of injury in violent disorder. It also calls on officers to be trained in core function defensive tactics techniques, so they can perform hands-on procedures and use reasonable and necessary force.

In this hybrid model, officers are introduced to de-escalation strategies and communication skills that enhance their ability to possibly change the outcome of a fluid and volatile situation. Scenario-based training and repetition of different outcomes helps them build confidence in the equipment and

tactics used.

One of the key differences between the U.S. public order response training model and the British model is that in the U.K. chiefs and commanders have to attend a three-week-long public order cadre course where in addition to other training they go through highly realistic real world scenarios with the line officers. This results in the command ranks having an understanding of the capabilities of their teams to influence the outcome of public order events. At the same time, they learn how to oversee the welfare and safety of every officer under their command.

## LEVEL 1 TRAINING

In 2016 this hybrid public order response model was adopted by the Maryland State Police, the United States Park Police, the Montgomery County (MD) Police Department, and other agencies.

In this model, officers who respond to protests and other civil unrest events are divided into three levels of training, standards, and responsibilities. Officers who are trained to stand the line in patrol uniform during peaceful protests are designated Level 3. Officers with a little more training and more protective equipment are designated Level 2. And officers trained and equipped to react to violent unrest are designated Level 1.

Agencies that follow this model hand select volunteers who want to be considered for appointment to one of the Level 1 public order teams. A Level 1 team is a specialized police public order unit that has specialized personal protective equipment, gear, and vehicles. They also have strong motivation, and the highest levels of training.

Officer fitness standards are very high for a Level 1 team. For example, they have to be able to complete a 1,000-meter run, carrying a riot shield, and wearing personal protective equipment in a time of five minutes or less.

Some may argue that there is no need for such fitness levels for public order officers. It can be controversial for law enforcement departments, chiefs, and unions to set a minimum



U.S. Park Police and Maryland State Police officers preparing for Molotov Introductory Training.

physical performance standard for their officers in these roles. However, they also have a duty of care, not only to the individual officer participating but also to the well-being and safety of the public order team as a whole.

A Level 1 public order team uses highly skilled small team tactics that can have a great effect on a vastly superior number of protesters. The members of this team need to meet a fitness level so they can face threats and still achieve their mission goals. We have to be honest with ourselves, extreme violent disorder and physical confrontation will take place during riots. The ability to deal with that violence physically and mentally is of paramount importance. And the fact is that when officers are not fit for the mission, they may resort to using an enhanced or excessive level of force to reduce the likely injury to ourselves or others.

To avoid using excessive force or even appearing to use excessive force, a public order team needs training in physical defense, less-than-lethal-weapon systems and munitions, and legal powers. This training must be continually reviewed and must evolve to meet changes in law and moral constraints.

Maintaining Level 1 public order team readiness is not easy. Officers have to be willing to partake in extreme stress, real-world scenario, and monthly in-service developmental skills training.

### EQUIPMENT STANDARDS

Public order officers need to have effective personal protective equipment (PPE). Not all equipment is equal, which is why there have to be standards for personal protective equipment that meet the common threats officers face during violent disorder.

Officers who are correctly equipped and have ready access to that equipment when needed will have greater confidence in their own personal protection. Suitable PPE will put them in a positive mental state to deal with volatile situations.

But officer confidence is not just about having the right



Level 1 team members must be at a fitness level to face threats and still achieve mission goals.



Working public order events can be physically and mentally draining for officers.



Ongoing training with other local agencies ensures all officers will be able to work together seamlessly.



Public order team members must be ready to react appropriately to all manner of attacks.

equipment, it occurs because the officers are training with the right PPE under extremely stressful training conditions. Public order officers training in PPE should be exposed to Molotov cocktails, thrown projectiles such as bricks and bottles, and abusive language targeting them as individuals. The right training and PPE will condition them to react proportionately to real events.

Equipment needs to meet a minimum requirement to protect officers so that when they are called in to deal with violent disorder, they will be protected from many of the threats they will be exposed to. At this time, however, there is no established U.S. protection standard for this equipment. Looking at lessons learned by foreign law enforcement, who see violent public disorder on a regular basis and have already established protection standards, we can adopt the same. And I think this is the wisest option until a new commonly agreed upon standard can be set for the U.S.

The current British standard covers the individual officer from head to toe.

The helmet is of a non-ballistic type that takes high impact blunt trauma from both pointed and blunt objects such as a brick thrown at 40 mph. It should also have the ability to shed burning gasoline and protect the full face against threats from projectiles and fire. A fire-resistant balaclava should be worn under the helmet in the event of Molotovs being used against the officer. This balaclava is not to conceal the identity of the officer but instead to protect against injury.

On the officer's main torso, they should wear a Merino long sleeve, long pant base layer. This will help regulate the officer's core temperature in extremes of heat and cold. They will also wear protective limb and groin guards that will protect them from bricks and other projec-

tiles thrown at 40 mph.

Over the top of the base layer, the officers will wear a burning gasoline shedding over suit. This protects the officers and it conceals the presence of the limb protection and armor, so

the officers do not appear paramilitary. Each officer in the team will have the option to wear either covert or overt ballistic body armor.

Officers' feet and ankles should be protected by a public order boot. These boots will be rated to stop punctures by nails and glass. The top and side of the boots must be rated to protect feet from bricks and other kinetic objects. The whole boot has to be fully fire resistant with the ability to shed burning chemicals.

Public order team gloves need to be impact-, slash-, and fire resistant. But they also have to give the officers enough dexterity that they can proficiently operate firearms and execute hands-on defensive tactic and subject control skills.

For gear, each officer should carry a hydration system, communication system, personal Halotron fire extinguisher, sidearm, 24-inch acrylic baton (or equivalent), and according to the SOPs of their agency the rest of their personal protective tools such as a TASER, OC spray, or other tools.

Shields are extremely critical for a Level 1 public order team. Each officer needs to have access to varying types of Makrolon shields. Makrolon is a type of gasoline shedding high-impact polycarbonate. Polycarbonate riot shields come in a 6-foot, 4-foot,

and round shield configuration. They can protect the officers from an enhanced threat from handheld weapons such as axes, baseball bats, machetes, and even samurai swords.

When acquiring PPE and gear for your team, be aware that not all equipment is equal. One officer injured is one officer too many and an officer hurt due to substandard equipment is an officer who may use excessive use of force to retaliate in anger, which can be costly in terms of injury and liability for everyone involved.

### USING FORCE

Some may argue that with the types of threats mentioned above, we should have the ability and the right to use a higher level of force. This can be a controversial subject where passions and emotions can steer decisions. A stalemate and frustrations with the crowd can result in the use of multiple types of crowd dispersal munitions that can cause unnecessary punishment to whole communities or attendees at events.

Tear gas/OC is commonly the fallback option for dispersing most protests that have turned into a state of disorder. This has pros and cons. Yes, it can be effective. Yes, it can disperse some members of a crowd. However, it can be detrimental to those

who are not committing offenses who are inadvertently caught up in a location where disorder is nearby and those munitions have been used. It can affect unprotected officers. It can cause alarm and distress to children and the elderly who may have breathing difficulties. And it can also cost an agency or city financially due to decontamination and civil law suits. There are some agencies worldwide that have moved away from this type of munition in favor of the dynamic action of small team tactics.

Some of the modern less-than-lethal weapon systems available to law enforcement for crowd control in violent situations can be extremely effective. But proficiency through training is essential, and such weapon systems need to be highly accurate

and used only against individuals committing violent offenses who we intend to arrest.

A policy of indiscriminate targeting of a crowd is unacceptable in today's policing practices. All officers should remember that every action they take will be recorded by either the media or individual citizens with recording devices. No officer is above the law. Every officer should clearly display their call sign or ID numbers or public order numbers so that the agency they are with can be transparent

about the actions taken by the officers under their command.

Public order in the 21st century must evolve from the lessons learned in the past century where some inappropriate action by poorly trained officers resulted in negative views of how the police dealt with minority groups protesting under their First Amendment right.

We must get better at separating anarchists and violent agitators from peaceful protestors who are following the law and facilitate the ability for peaceful protestors to protest safely and without fear of retribution from police and federal agencies. We must also accept that we need specially trained and specially equipped public order officers to deal with the ever-increasing workload of protests now happening nationwide. Training and equipment must be improved to protect both officers and the citizens during this demanding time. ☯

---

*Geoff Perrin is former British Army and a London Metropolitan Police Officer who served as a Public Order Level 1 officer and instructor. Perrin has been involved in public order for 27 years. He is now a U.S. citizen and a partner in Survival Edge Tactical Systems Inc. ([www.survival edgedgetactical.com](http://www.survival edgedgetactical.com)), training officers both internationally and in the U.S. in public order response.*



It's important that public order teams train realistically using all of their equipment so they can build confidence in their ability to withstand attacks.

# Body-Worn Cameras at Civil Disturbances

THE USE OF BODY-WORN CAMERAS IN PUBLIC ORDER OPERATIONS IS COMPLICATED. There are some very real tactical and practical concerns that agencies need to consider and there are legal issues that may affect the agency's ability to capture images of peaceful demonstrators.

Whether body cameras can be effectively employed during a public order event depends on a variety of factors. If the march or demonstration remains peaceful and officers remain in patrol uniforms with no helmets, then the use of body cameras is not much different than it would be in any patrol interaction with the public.



Body-worn camera use at protests is complicated. If legally allowed, they can be used before protests become violent.

However, there are cases where filming a protest is prohibited by local ordinance. Some cities have policies that prohibit officers from filming people lawfully exercising their First Amendment rights at protests. Some of those do, however, allow the filming of unlawful activity at the protests.

Once things turn unlawful, however, it can be difficult to capture any viable footage with body cameras. Riot officers wear helmets with shields, which don't easily accommodate head-mounted systems. Torso mounted systems can be blocked by shields or pulled off by violent subjects.

Which is why the Cleveland Division of Police announced before last summer's Republican National Convention that its public order officers would not be using body cameras at the event. The reason was that they could not be mounted to the

department's HWI Elite Defender ([www.hwigear.com](http://www.hwigear.com)) riot gear. Cleveland officers wear TASER Axons, and when word of the problem reached TASER ([www.taser.com](http://www.taser.com)), the company loaned the Cleveland PD 300 special mounts so the riot officers could wear cameras.

In January, the London Metropolitan Police announced that their public order officers would wear body cameras during future incidents. The riot squad officers are wearing their cameras in the same type of mount that was used in Cleveland.—*David Griffith*

# THE MAKING OF A P

**AFTER THE FREDDIE GRAY RIOTS IN BALTIMORE, THE MARYLAND STATE POLICE UPDATED ITS CIVIL UNREST RESPONSE UNIT'S ORGANIZATION, TRAINING, EQUIPMENT, AND TACTICS.**

**DAVID GRIFFITH**



PHOTOS: GEOFF PERRIN

All Maryland State Police troopers receive Level 3 public order training so they can aid in crowd control.

**B**ack in 2015 after its experience in the Baltimore riots sparked by the in-custody death of Freddie Gray, the Maryland State Police mobile field force team knew it was time to make some changes in its response to civil unrest.

First Sergeant Richard Carroll says the MSP sent about 500 officers to Baltimore to work the riots. They were primarily assigned to guard and protect the city's infrastructure working with National Guard units. What Carroll saw in Baltimore convinced him that the tactics and organization of the MSP's mobile field force needed to evolve to meet the challenges presented by possible future riots.

"After two or three days of the unrest that we experienced in Baltimore, I just felt there had to be a better way to de-escalate these types of incidents. Up to that point our team hadn't been tested in that way. Once you're battle tested like that, it can change your philosophy," Carroll says.

Working with Montgomery County Police lieutenant Pete Davidov, Carroll

did some research and they sought out Geoff Perrin of Survival Edge Tactical Systems Inc. ([www.survivedgetactical.com](http://www.survivedgetactical.com)). Perrin, a naturalized U.S. citizen from England, is a veteran of numerous riots in Northern Ireland and in metropolitan London, where he served as a law enforcement officer. And as you can read on page 6, he believes American law enforcement agencies need to modify their approach to crowd and riot control to add elements of the tactics and equipment used in the United Kingdom.

## LEVELS OF RESPONSE

Carroll returned after taking the training at Perrin's Salt Lake City facility to reorganize the way the MSP approaches civil unrest. He also brought in Perrin to conduct specialized training.

The MSP public order response team is still called a mobile field force, but it is now organized into three levels of training and responsibility. There are 300 MSP troopers, not including command personnel, trained in public order response and assigned to the unit as part of their duties. They're broken down

into 14 platoons, with two of those platoons trained to the highest standard.

On the MSP mobile field force, the highest standard of training is Level 1 and the lowest standard is Level 3. All MSP troopers receive Level 3 public order training, which consists of eight hours of training in such topics as crowd dynamics, crowd behavior, legal considerations, and how to de-escalate tense situations. Level 3 officers stand the line in patrol uniforms, show presence, and maintain order during peaceful protests. When things get more tense and dangerous, the MSP's Level 2 public order officers, who are members of the mobile field force, are sent in. They receive 24 hours of training in crowd control, including how to work in basic riot gear. Then if things get violent, the Level 1 officers are deployed.

Level 1 officers receive all the training received by the other levels of officers plus practical riot scenarios in full personal protective equipment (PPE), carrying all necessary equipment. MSP mobile field force officers who perform Level 1 public order operations learn to trust the protection of their impact- and

# PUBLIC ORDER TEAM

fire-resistant PPE by being subjected to thrown rocks and bricks and even the blast of flames from firebombs. Their mission is to arrest violent offenders and disperse criminal elements of the crowd.

Carroll says it was the intensity of the training and its effect that convinced him Perrin's methods would benefit the MSP. "As soon as I put the equipment on and started getting hit with bricks and Molotov cocktails, I felt like this was going to be something worth investing in for the future," he says.

Later when Perrin came to Maryland and trained a platoon of the mobile field force, Carroll says the transformation of his officers told him he had made the right decision. "As our troopers experienced that training and wore the equipment, you could see the confidence building in the tactics and equipment and their ability to de-escalate violent unrest."

## DEPLOYING THE PLATOONS

All of the members of the MSP mobile field force, whether Level 1 or Level 2, are not full-time public order officers. They are stationed around Maryland as patrol troopers and performing other law enforcement duties. So when they are needed to perform public order operations, the teams have to be assembled.

Carroll says the troopers can be called out suddenly for a spontaneous event and that procedures are in place to ensure their duties are handled by other personnel. Also, a quick reaction force is available in the Washington, DC, and Baltimore areas. "We can call up as many as four platoons if we need them and have them mobilized in the Baltimore/Washington area within about two hours. That's fully equipped, vehicles on the ground, ready to go," Carroll says.

The team's recent deployments, however, have all been pre-planned. For example, through a memorandum of understanding with the United States Park Police, the team was deployed in Washington, DC, during the Trump inauguration. Such planned events give the MSP time to schedule trooper rotations.

## TACTICS ON THE STREET

Carroll says the MSP experience during the inauguration is a good example of how the team's training and tactics can be applied during actual civil unrest in-



Maryland State Police Level 1 officers have real Molotov cocktails thrown at them during training.

idents. He explains that during the inauguration, the Level 3 (plain uniform) officers were generally very effective in speaking with the public and de-escalating tension. But there were some violent elements in the crowd.

"We [MSP's Level 1 platoons] were there with the Montgomery County (MD) Police Department and we were both married up with the U.S. Park Police Level 1 team," Carroll says. "Some violent disorder broke out in the afternoon, and we dispersed that crowd, ending that riot in just a few minutes."

Carroll says after the rioting was quelled, the team also helped DC Metropolitan Police make some 200 arrests for property damage and other crimes.

"The [rioters] burned a limousine and broke into some businesses. But our Level 1 team went in and assisted DC Metro's Level 2 team, and we knocked that down pretty quick."

## LESSONS LEARNED

Such multi-agency deployments of public order officers now run smoothly, as many of the Washington/Baltimore-area agencies have adopted the Levels concept of civil unrest response, according to Carroll. He adds that the only way to achieve that successful cooperation and teamwork is to work for it.

"The biggest thing I have learned that I want to share with other agencies is that you have to have your mutual aid teams trained to the same standards and provided with the same equipment, and they need to train together on a scheduled basis two to four times per year," Carroll says. "You need to get together, the commanders need to know each other, so that you have the mutual aid worked out. That's important for any large-scale incident whether it is civil unrest, a mass casualty incident, or a coordinated terror attack."

Maintaining communications between all the involved teams has been particularly trying at some civil unrest incidents, according to Carroll. "You have to have a robust and comprehensive communications plan, and it has to be interoperable with all of your mutual aid partners."

Carroll says communications breakdowns during a civil disturbance can put officers at risk. "You need to be able to communicate with the other platoons in the field because if you want to do a maneuver or you want to deploy CS gas, that can push a violent crowd on top of another platoon; they need to know it's coming." ❖

# BICYCLES FOR CROWD

It is **October**, the air is cooler, and the World Series is getting underway. The baseball fans gather as the innings draw on and the soon-to-be champs are swinging at the plate. The extra innings pile on and not only does the excitement build but so does the crowd rooting for the underdog. Officers are ready as the last out is played. The crowd cheers for its champions and heads to the streets. The throngs of people spill out into the roadways, causing chaos and mayhem. As local patrol units attempt to direct the masses, the crowd is obviously getting out of control. Believe it or not, this may be an ideal time to bring in the bicycle unit.

A large crowd can be quelled and moved by a properly trained bicycle officer. A well-tuned unit with proper training can reduce the amount of patrol resources needed for any given task. It is always the command staff's responsibility to assess what resources will be used for different types of incidents, but a well-trained bicycle unit can be an effective tool in a variety of situations, including those in need of crowd control.

## THE BIKE FENCE

The "bike fence," as the International Police Mountain Bike Association training refers to it, is the basic maneuver in any bicycle contact. The bicycle is simply placed between the officer and their contact. The officer stands on the non-drive side of the bicycle. The bike can either be positioned with the kickstand down or up, with the officer maintaining control of the bike with both hands. If the officer is placing the kickstand down, they can move laterally to keep the subject at bay. It provides a safety barrier for the officer and an increased reactionary gap for any potential threats. The officer then can move the bicycle itself, laterally or forward, to escort the subject away or direct the subject by mirroring the subjects' actions. The bicycle can be placed down on the ground to create more distance with an aggressive subject.

The bike fence is also the legal boundary between you and your contact. An appropriately outfitted bicycle with police insignias and markings can serve as more than just a mode of transportation. When placed appropriately, the bicycle can serve as a clear demarcation of where not to go. If bicycle officers use good communication and properly articulate that the line is not to be crossed, anyone who might pass through a bike fence could possibly face arrest for entering a crime scene or disobeying police commands.

You can add to the bike fence by overlapping the front tire



Officers can easily create a "bike fence" by lining up their bicycles end to end, creating a barrier.



PHOTOS: CHRISTIAN BAILEY

of one bicycle with the rear tire of the bicycle in front of it. This can be accomplished with as few as two officers but can be greatly effective with multiple officers overlapping their wheels to create a larger barrier to move in front of large crowds. The number of officers is dictated by the size of the crowd and the environment it is in. Maneuvers are done in either a static or moving position.

## MOVING OR STATIC DISPLAY

The static use of bicycles is usually seen at the end of roadways or at large intersections. They can be placed across roadways, placing the bikes front wheel over rear wheel, in solid formation that allows for a skirmish line to be created in a mobile field force situation. As long as the integrity of the formation is maintained, a unit can conduct arrests and maneuvers behind the line of bicycles effectively and safely. Mobile field force units that deploy accessory weapons or those that are on foot can move through the skirmish line to effect arrests. The static line of bicycles can be much more effective than patrol officers standing shield to shield. A group of bicycles can be placed front tire to rear tire, the officers can move back several feet, and the integrity of the line is still maintained.

A moving group of bicycle officers can be used in the same manner as most mobile field force formations. They can be positioned in a wedge formation, forcing groups to move laterally

# CONTROL

A WELL-TUNED, PROPERLY TRAINED BICYCLE UNIT CAN EFFECTIVELY MANAGE MASS GATHERINGS OF PEOPLE. **Christian Bailey**

or pushing the group back. A clear command of "move back" must be used in time with moving the bike fence back toward a group or subject.

Bicycles can also be used in columns to prevent moving subjects from gaining access to a particular area. This is the easiest and most effective way to move a group of bicycles. Once in a column, officers can turn and form a barrier between the intended groups. Officers can then be placed away from the crowd to quickly respond only when needed. This provides a swift movement of officers to one location with little disruption of a crowd.

These columns can also be used to protect dignitaries and move them through a crowd. The columns will ride on each side of the individual with a point officer directing the group by clearly communicating turns and parting the crowd.

In 2016, thousands of people attended the Republican National Convention. Some were supporters while others were attending in protest. In anticipation of the large crowds, the organizing bodies elected to use bicycle officers instead of patrol resources for security. This was because bicycle officers are more mobile and can react more quickly to the movements of the protests. They are also less assuming and have a less threatening effect on most crowds. A concern in any moving protest is how to maintain professionalism and effectiveness, without sacrificing the safety of the group. As a moving unit of 20-30 bicycle officers per group, 300 bike officers were able to surround entrances and seal off corridors to raucous protestors, which were constantly moving back and forth. They did so by positioning their bicycles in a proper bike fence with overlapping tires.

## TRAINING AND EQUIPMENT

The greatest asset in moving crowds is proper training and equipment. In field force and crowd movement situations, wearing long sleeves and pants is best if munitions are being used. Wearing padded sleeves or shoulder pads has been found to be effective against crowds that are violent. The use of downhill riding gear has shown to be effective due to its reduced weight and ease of maneuverability in it.

Officers must practice using specialty equipment to create a professional and effective response. Riding while wearing a gas mask can cause some officers to panic. Mimicking riot-like atmospheres in training can reduce the risk of panic during a real incident. The use of smoke canisters in training can also help practice the reduced visibility one might face in addressing an



The right clothing and gear will help protect against violence while maintaining maneuverability.

aggressive crowd.

Effective communication is also a must in moving crowds. The calmest crowd can be a chore to control when the group is not acting as one, or when the goal has not been properly communicated.

The lead, or point, officer should be clearly identified prior to moving the crowd. Always assess the routes of escape for the crowd as well as potential hang-ups prior to attempting to move them.

To best prepare yourself to handle crowds as part of a bicycle unit, look for proper training in your area. The International Police Mountain Bike Association provides a 40-hour course covering basic police cycling. Additional courses provided instruction in the use of bicycle response teams. These courses focus on crowd control and dispersal techniques as well as quelling riot groups. 🚲

---

*Officer Christian Bailey has been a police officer for 12 years with the Scottsdale (AZ) Police Department and is currently assigned to the Bike Unit where he has been a member for nine years. He is an International Police Mountain Bike Association (IPMBA) EMS and Police Cyclist Instructor and most recently taught at the 2015 National Conference in Chandler, AZ.*