

The Circuit

For Security And Protection Specialists

ISSUE
43

The Myth of the
Individual Bodyguard

TACTICAL SHOOTING TRAINING

Assessing Your

OPERATIONAL
READINESS

Defining Professionalism
in the Protection Industry

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TRAINING FOR TACTICAL SHOOTING

State Duma deputy, Sergei Yushenkov, was killed in Moscow, apparently in a contract killing. He had just left his chauffeur-driven car and was walking towards his apartment block in the early evening. He was shot in the back four times by an assassin armed with a silenced Makarov pistol.

April 2003, Russia

Handguns are meant for close-quarter shooting. Think about it; if someone is going to attack, kidnap or rob you on the street, they are going to be close, within conversational range. Now, look around your home or business and see what the maximum distance is that you would have a clear shot at a criminal or terrorist, for

most this will be less than 10 yards/meters. This places emphasis on close quarter instinctive shooting over precision target shooting. As part of your training practice for long distance shoots (for handguns, this means over 25 yards), you should try hitting targets out to and over 100 yards. This will improve your handgun skills and

show you your capabilities and limitations, but the emphasis should be on close quarter instinctive shooting.

When you have learned to shoot and hit a target safely, and when you can fire consistently aimed shots into a silhouette target at 15 yards, you will be ready to move to more advanced drills.

There are two main range stances that I teach for defensive shooting: the isosceles and what can be classed as a modified weaver stance. Again, it is up to you to find out which one works for you.

When training people in instinctive shooting, the isosceles stance is usually the easiest for people to learn quickly and produces decent results; this why it's taught to a lot of law enforcement units. There are pros and cons to both isosceles and the modified weaver stances, try both and see which gives you the best results. In reality, the chances are you won't have the time or be in a position to get into a formal stance in a hostile shooting incident. ►



Isosceles Stance

In the isosceles stance, you stand square in front of the target, both arms are pushed out in front of the body to form an isosceles triangle; your chest is the base of the triangle, and the arms make the sides with the handgun, in a two-handed grip, at the point of the triangle (see below diagram). Your feet should be shoulder-width apart pointing forward, and your knees slightly bent to form a solid stance. The isosceles is an easy stance to teach people to shoot from and is ideal for most people's needs.

Many law enforcement agencies favor the isosceles because it is so simple for the reason that when they stand square in front of the target, they get the maximum protection from their body armor. The disadvantage with the isosceles is that it is a rigid stance and does not allow for a great range of movement, which is essential if you believe you will possibly be dealing with professional criminals and skilled attackers. If you are working or living in some developing countries in Latin America, Africa

*Classic isosceles stance*

or Asia, the chances are that the kidnappers and armed robbers are former or serving police or military personnel and will have some tactical skills. Always respect the opposition and train to deal with professionals!

Modified Weaver Stance

This stance is basically a boxer's stance, and if I am training a martial artist, I try to get them shooting from their guard positions as they already have muscle memory for this and we are just adding in a handgun.

We will assume that you are right-handed (if you are left-handed, simply reverse the hand and foot placement). Place your feet slightly wider than shoulder-width apart and have your left foot in front, with your right foot at about a 45-degree angle behind your left foot. You should slightly twist your body to the right, so you are side on to the target. Now, with your weapon in your right hand, bring both hands up to the level of your chest. Push the right hand out towards the target, lock the elbow and support it ►

*Modified Weaver Stance*



relevance when you consider that in most places the criminals and terrorists use assault rifles and their rounds will go straight through all but the most expensive concealable body armor. Also, if the criminals are trained to fire head shots the body armor will be dead weight anyway!

Instinctive Shooting

In close quarter defensive shooting, you do not aim as such, using your handguns sights, because usually, you do not have time for this. You use a method known as instinctive, or point shooting. Point shooting is simple - you point the gun and pull the trigger. You need to ensure you have a good grip on your handgun, your wrist is locked, and the forearm of your gun hand is in line with your handgun.

For instinctive or point shooting at ranges of about 3 to 10 yards, you should bring the handgun up with stretched arms at chest or chin level, with both eyes looking at your target area. Point the gun at the target area (i.e. head or chest); when the target is aligned, you fire. There is no need to

with the left hand. You should now have a strong two-handed grip. This stance gives you a greater range of both upper and lower body movement than you get with the isosceles and it also presents a smaller target to the attacker.

The reason that many law enforcement agencies do not use the modified weaver or boxer's stance is that when standing side on to a target, the weak spots in body armor (the side and armhole) are exposed. To me this is not an issue because in reality, if someone is pointing a gun at you or shooting at you, you should be shooting back, moving, and getting behind cover very, very, quickly. The issue with this stance, in relation to body armor, has minor

“You want to work up to drawing from a concealed holster, pointing and dry firing (handgun unloaded) at different points, from different position, this is good training and will improve your shooting.”

use the sights, just point and shoot. I have seen students who have been taught to always use the sights on their handguns, even at close quarters, and have difficulty getting good results when shooting. More often than not, this is because they are concentrating too hard on lining up their sights. They are often amazed at how much more comfortable and faster they become and what good results they can get from point shooting.

You want to work up to drawing from a concealed holster, pointing and dry firing (handgun unloaded) at different points, from different



positions, this is good training and will improve your shooting.

To train in instinctive or point shooting at the range with live ammunition, place a silhouette target at approximately 5 yards down range. Hold your handgun with a relaxed two-handed isosceles or modified weaver/boxer's stance and point at the bottom of the target.

(below) photo of the Risk Inc. Tactical Police Training Course in Latin America

Look at the chest area of the target and raise your handgun until it is pointing at the area where you are looking at, without using the sights. When your gun is stable fire a single shot and then check the target to see where the round hit. Continue with this practice until your shots regularly hit the chest area, then move on to the head.

Next, it's time to progress to firing two quick shots; this is called "double-tapping". You want to work up to being able to



shoot at least five shots instinctively, rapidly and accurately into a target at 5 yards and beyond. If you are involved in a hostile situation you need to put as many rounds as possible into the criminal as quickly as possible to end the confrontation before you, your family or clients get hurt. Remember, you need to have a good grip and keep your wrist locked and forearm aligned with your handgun. As you will see, instinctive, or point-shooting is simple: just get a good grip on the

weapon then point and shoot.

Above photo: Mexican Police practicing close protection drills and shooting from the hip on a Risk Inc. training course.

If you are unfortunate enough to ever have to use your handgun for defensive reasons, you need to continue to put rounds into the criminal or terrorist until they go down and no longer present a threat. If you do not think you could ever shoot and possibly kill a ►

person, then don't carry a gun and consider other non-lethal methods of self-defense. If you pull a gun and freeze, you could be giving the bad guys a weapon they could take from and used against you.

Do not get into the habit of shooting at the center of mass on police qualification silhouette targets as this is usually the middle of the stomach area, shots there will kill someone in time, but there are no vital organs there. A good example of this could be the Toulouse (France) terrorist incident in March 2012 where the terrorist "Mohamed Merah" was killed by French Security forces. The terrorist "Merah" was responsible for numerous attacks on unarmed French military personnel and Jewish

families which resulted in 8 deaths and others wounded.

The French police and security forces located Merah at his 2nd-floor apartment, and a siege situation developed. After several days the tactical team "RAID" assaulted Merah's apartment, which he had barricaded to slow down attackers. When the RAID team made entry, Merah attacked them with guns blazing, in the resulting gun battle three members of the RAID team were shot. Merah was shot over 20 times but still managed to jump through a window, where a sniper finally killed him with a head shot.

It was reported that Merah received multiple shots to the arms and legs, it's clear the RAID assault team were not

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going for headshots, the post-incident reports state over 300 rounds were fired. Especially at close quarters, you must be hitting vital organs and bones to end the situation as quickly as possible. The RAID team is very highly trained but at close quarters when

lead is flying, and there is no cover luck has a lot to do with not getting hit! So, avoid the situation or end it as quickly as possible!

Blow Photo: Elite Mexican Police conducting live fire entries on a Risks Inc. tactical training course.

The director of a St. Petersburg company, Dmitry Varvarin, was shot and killed outside his home in the early evening as he left his car. He assassin fired one shot in to Mr. Varvarin's head with a Makarov pistol.

March 2000, Russia



Orlando Wilson has worked in the security industry internationally for over 25 years. He has become accustomed to the types of complications that can occur, when dealing with international law enforcement agencies, organized criminal and Mafia groups. He is the chief consultant for Risks Inc. and based in Miami but spends much of his time traveling and providing a wide range of kidnapping prevention and tactical training services to private and government clients.