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# The Counter Terrorist

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COMBAT CONDITIONING



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COVER STORY:

A photograph showing two men practicing Tai Chi in a gym. The man on the left is wearing a black t-shirt and light blue pants, while the man on the right is wearing a black t-shirt and black pants. They are both in a similar Tai Chi stance, with their arms extended forward. The background shows a gym setting with various equipment.

27

**31**

**Cover Photo:** *Fabiana Kocubey*



# COMBAT CONDITIONING: THE FOUNDATIONS OF SURVIVAL

By **Bernardo C.**

*Commit to the way of the warrior;  
there are no shortcuts.*

*Photo by: Fabiana Kocubey*

My friend Pavel was a trained boxer; he did not serve in the military. One night while drinking, two of our country's finest decided to stab him for dancing with the wrong girl. While Pavel had no official self-defense or hand-to-hand combat training, he was able to survive this close encounter with two armed killers. How did he do that? Beyond

pure luck and medical treatment, Pavel had a combat spirit and he was capable of delivering violence. Pavel did not react with any fancy defensive or deflective moves against the knife, nor did he employ any special tactics. He simply struck at them with punches while he was still standing, knocking one of them out immediately. Once Pavel fell to the floor, he did not use his legs for

defensive kicking; he fished around with his hands for the nearest object that he could pick up and strike with. He found a tree branch and used it to strike at the remaining attacker, deterring him and prompting him to run away. My friend received dozens of stab wounds, but he lived to tell the tale.

## WHAT ELEMENTS CAN INFLUENCE OUR SURVIVAL DURING A DEADLY HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT SCENARIO?

The main elements of survival are **SPIRIT - MIND - BODY**, in that order. Without a strong fighting SPIRIT and the will to survive, you probably won't make it. You will freeze and let your attacker do whatever they want, and this will most likely result in more damage or complete neutralization. If you choose to fight, however, you stand a chance. Your MIND is your strongest weapon, and your internal dialogue and your mental ability will dictate your effectiveness. When strong, they allow you to identify and seize opportunities and follow concepts correctly under stress. Your BODY is the machine and you need to take care of it. You also need to train it to become dangerous and powerful. This is the difference between bringing an old French campaign cannon to a fight or a modern battle tank.

### SPIRIT

*It's not the size of the dog in the fight, it's the size of the fight in the dog.*  
— MARK TWAIN

Have you ever seen a bird defend its nest? No matter the size of the predator, a bird will be extremely aggressive and transmit an extreme will to survive.

This aggressive instinct is natural to human beings as well. We developed it in order to hunt larger animals and defend ourselves from predators. However, we've learned over time to repress this instinct because this radical behavior is unacceptable in today's society. Aggression is viewed as incompatible with being a normative citizen. In school, aggressive kids are punished. In the streets or at work, aggressive behavior does not get you far either. This is legitimate and it makes perfect sense in terms of keeping order in the world. In matters of life and death, however, aggression is key. We must learn to release the violent and aggressive animal that is hiding inside when needed.

## WHY IS THIS AGGRESSIVE IMPULSE SO IMPORTANT AND HOW DO WE USE IT EFFECTIVELY?

Aggression is important because it serves first and foremost as a deterrent to attackers. Studies have shown that sexual predators choose easy targets over hard ones. We see this in professional contact sports as well. Some fighters "lose the fight" in their minds before they even enter the arena. Think about Mike Tyson's deterrence and legendary mental intimidation tactics. In his prime, no one wanted to fight Mike Tyson, and those who did came into the ring knowing they were going

A key component of special forces combat doctrine in the most dangerous and violent scenarios, violence of action means the unrestricted use of speed, strength, surprise, and aggression to dominate your adversary.

to lose. When you develop a highly aggressive attitude, you become a very scary person who no one wants to mess with.

In addition to the valuable deterrence it gives, aggression is also a critical element in violence of action. A key component of special forces combat doctrine in the most dangerous and violent scenarios, violence of action means the unrestricted use of speed, strength, surprise, and aggression to dominate your adversary. This means you hit with bad intentions and overwhelm your opponent with killer speed and power, swift and deadly.

This violence of action begins by "turning on the switch". As previously stated, we live in a zero aggression state of life, but we must accelerate our transition to aggression when presented with danger. One of the



Photo by: Fabiana Kocubey

main lessons of military hand-to-hand combat is controlling this internal switch, and learning how to go from a zero level of aggression to a 100 level immediately. This is necessary because when you are on the defense, you start with a handicap. You are relaxed and distracted when the attacker surprises you at a 100 level of aggression and violence, and with complete physical and psychological readiness. Learning how to react immediately and reach a maximum level of violence quickly can mean the difference between life and death. There is no time to lose and you must wake up the beast in order to fight for your life—no warmups, no drills, just a cold start FIGHT.

All of this does not work if a strong will to survive is not present. It's not over until it's over, and you never ever

ever quit, no matter what! Countless people have been put through incredible hardships and have managed to survive against all odds: policemen and military who continue to fight until their last breath; victims who escape life threatening scenarios even though they are injured, outnumbered, or out powered; people who have survived years of captivity. What all of these people have in common is a remarkable and unbreakable will to live, no matter the odds.

### MIND

*Don't depend on the enemy not coming; depend rather on being ready for him.* — SUN TZU

This is perhaps the hardest concept to understand and develop into full

mastery. The idea of prevention is one of the greatest foundations of security at any level. Personal, material, and elite dignitary protection success are all based upon the concept of prevention over reaction. Some of the main ideas of this concept are risk analysis, security and emergency planning, deterrence, deception, unpredictability, surveillance, and technology. At a professional level some applications of this concept could include writing an effective risk analysis and emergency response protocol for a company or infrastructure, selecting random routes of travel for a VIP or dignitary, employing undercover surveillance and protection assets, and positioning overt units and assets to produce deterrence upon the adversary.

Even if you are not a big person, your personal confidence and state of mind transfer into the desired body language and are reflected in the way you carry yourself.

## PLAN THE SAFEST ROUTE TO A LOCATION.

Will passing through any neighborhood or area be a wise choice at any time of day or night and under any circumstances? In terms of protection and accountability, does anyone know that you are in the back of a taxi? Do you know the number and name of the driver? Send it to someone who will have your back and look for you or help you if things go wrong.

## PROTECT YOUR BASE CAMP.

How easily can someone break into your home? Have you set up a surveillance system? Have you set up effective prevention and emergency response protocols at home? Do you drill these concepts often with your family members?

## IDENTIFY DANGEROUS BEHAVIOR OR THREATS EARLY.

You can be completely submerged in your smartphone looking for the latest Pokémon, or you can maintain peripheral awareness of what's happening around you. Your level of awareness is a critical deterrent for any

attacker. Investigations of both foiled and successful terror and criminal plots have shown that adversaries look for the weakest link—they choose a distracted guard or a policeman who is busy with his phone or food over the one who looks ready to put up a fight. Furthermore, in heavily crowded locations, being able to perceive individual treats or abnormal crowd behavior is key to reacting in time.

## CHOOSE YOUR KIT.

Choose the right clothing and tool system (i.e., functional soles over high heels, garments that allow quicker movement and deployment of weapons, and so on). If you carry a gun or pepper spray inside a handbag, will you be able to deploy it under pressure? Are you aware of the condition of your weapon? Do you know how to effectively and safely use your weapon?

## PRACTICE PERSONAL DETERRENCE.

What is your personal deterrence level? Do you look dangerous? Are you focused or distracted? Do you look scared? Even if you are not a big person, your personal confidence and state of mind transfer into the desired body language and are reflected in the way you carry yourself.

## BODY

*The three most important things in a fighter are fitness, fitness, and more fitness. — B.P.*

Many years ago, one of my first coaches asked me, “What are the three most important things a good fighter needs?” I mentioned many sound qualities, but this did not satisfy him. He said, “Firstly, a good fighter needs superior fitness. Secondly, more fitness. And thirdly, fitness one more time.” You may not agree with this right now, but it is 100 percent accurate for professional fighters and very relevant for everyday people on the street as well.

For example, consider professional fighting organizations like the UFC. There are many skilled candidates with decades of martial arts experience dying to get a UFC contract. However, the UFC sometimes hires transitioning athletes from football or other professional sports, even though they have no fighting background. This decision—although odd and controversial—is based on sound judgement. These men have superb athleticism and an experienced professional athlete mentality; this allows them to compete at the highest level faster than others with better technique.

A strong body reflects deterrence and confidence. Being healthy and in shape allows you to reach higher levels of training and gives you additional benefits in your life as well. Training hard is also an exercise in mental toughness because it requires grit and determination to push yourself beyond

your comfort zone. Moreover, a strong and fit person is usually a disciplined person, and discipline is a quality that leads to success at the highest levels.

I believe the optimal training regimen is the following:

- Train five or six days a week and rest one or two days.
  - This includes martial arts, but does not include shooting or tactical unless you are doing something physically challenging there, too.
- Eat a low carb diet.
  - Go for high protein and fat with as little carbohydrates as possible.
- Sleep six hours a day.
  - *If you need to sleep more, do it faster. — Arnold Schwarzenegger*

## PHYSICAL TRAINING PRESCRIPTION

- Run, swim, ruck, bicycle, or row at least two or three times a week (in additionl to martial arts training) and place special focus on short and medium interval training.
- For strength, focus on pull, push, lift, squat, and core movements.
  - Do at least two cross-training high intensity circuits per week, including some of these movements with light weights Add accessory movements to this workout (complementary movements and angles) and a cardio component such as jump rope, burpees, rowing, running, hitting a heavy bag, and so on.
  - Example: Five rounds for time of

500 meter row, 21 pull ups, 15 hand release pushups, 9 thrusters.

- Do at least two strict weightlifting sessions per week (powerlifting).
- You can combine these into the same session by starting your workout with powerlifting and finishing off with a 15 minute circuit.
- Stretch or practice yoga for a minimum of 30 minutes, at least once a week.
- Variety is critical to avoiding overuse and training your body to be ready for anything. DO NOT do the same thing every day.

## STRENGTHENING THE BODY FOR FIGHTING

Recently, a student asked me if



Photo by: Unsplash

it's normal that her hands hurt after punching some pads without gloves on. Of course this is natural because her hands are not used to hitting anything without protection. In real life, your hands will most likely get hurt. If you miss your target by even an inch or if the angle of your fist is not optimal, you may very well break your hand or wrist. When your punch breaks someone's face bones or teeth, you may hurt your hand on the fragments. One of the biggest advantages of martial artists, and karate practitioners specifically, is that their hands, bodies, and shins are conditioned for fighting. They condition their skin, muscles, connective tissue, and bones to be hard upon impact and to receive the pain. In order to do this, you must train without gloves, shin pads, and protective vests once in a while as well as strengthen specific joints such as the wrists, ankles, and knees to be prepared for street fighting. Kyokushin training and other martial arts have developed many ways to strengthen the body for fighting. Examples of this include breaking boards, rock, or ice and hitting a makiwara board to strengthen the hands. In this technique, you set a wooden board into a wall or use a standing plank and practice hitting it barehanded for thousands of repetitions, gradually reducing the padding to virtually nothing over time. This exercise efficiently hardens bone, muscle, and skin. Once you have achieved this, your opponent will feel like he is being hit by rocks.

"When training for self-defense purposes, you need to focus on techniques that are EASY to learn and RELEVANT to the real world."

## TRAINING

*The fight is won or lost far away from witnesses—behind the lines, in the gym, and out there on the road, long before I dance under those lights.*  
— MUHAMMAD ALI

## HOW DO WE TRAIN THESE CONCEPTS EFFECTIVELY?

When training for self-defense purposes, you need to focus on techniques that are EASY to learn and RELEVANT to the real world. Incredible research has been assembled by authors like Lt. Colonel Dave Grossman and Bruce Siddle on the subject of combat and survival training. According to research shown in Grossman's book *On Combat* and based on some of Siddle's work, we can expect certain psychological and physiological reactions to occur in our bodies during combat. Heart rate increase in response to fear is correlated with a deterioration of motor skills and senses like vision and hearing. Eventually, we can expect a decrease in cognitive abilities to a point that Grossman calls "condition black." In this condition,

vasoconstriction (narrowing of blood vessels) can occur, resulting in limited oxygen flow to the brain. This can cause a significant decrease in the brain's ability to think rationally. The books by Grossman and Siddle also identify correct training concepts and methodology to prepare for combat scenarios.

## EASY AND RELEVANT

*I fear not the man who has practiced 10,000 kicks once, but I fear the man who has practiced one kick 10,000 times.*  
— BRUCE LEE

Among the main concepts in his book *Sharpening the Warrior's Edge*, Bruce Siddle identified a significantly lower ability to perform complex tasks over simple tasks under the stress of battle. For example, when we are under stress, our bodies have a harder time performing a technique that requires lots of coordination, accuracy, and memory. In other words, the more stress we are exposed to, the harder it is to perform highly complex techniques. This is why we need to find techniques that are simple and easy to learn.

Furthermore, we need to master a technique in training in order to

perform it sufficiently well under the stress of battle. For instance, you may learn a simple strike technique like a straight punch, but your level of mastery dictates its effectiveness under stress. I may know how to close my fist and throw a punch, but that doesn't mean I will hit my target accurately and with enough power when I am under stress. In order to secure an acceptable level of performance, I begin by practicing this technique without stress for thousands of reps until I reach the desired level of mastery and confidence. When you master a punch, you can be fast, powerful, and accurate to a small moving target when under stress.

## STRIKES

For self-defense purposes, all strikes must be directed at the adversary's vulnerable points in order to be effective. Vulnerable points are body parts visible to you that cannot be strengthened by your adversary. Examples include the eyes, nose, throat, groin, and back of the head. Effective strikes to these areas include:

- Straight punches and hammer fists
- Elbows
- Knees and front kicks
- Head butts and eye gouges

These strikes are relevant because of the immediate damage they can cause

to vulnerable points. Furthermore, they are relevant in distance and scenario (crowded areas, on the floor, and so on) without pushing the warrior out of balance.

## CHOKES AND GRABS

These can be relevant when broken down into easy concepts. Nevertheless, without overwhelming aggression and effective striking skills, chokes and grabs will not work.

## KNIFE DEFENSE AND GUN DISARMS

These techniques are the trickiest ones to master because there is no perfect or total solution for these types

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of attacks. Chances are that you will be wounded if your attacker has a knife or a gun, and you may be gravely injured. But that doesn't mean you are out of the fight!

Countering these types of attacks requires the immediate and aggressive application of simple concepts under stress. You cannot prepare for every angle, every blade, every size of attacker, and every possible situation. But you can achieve a deep understanding of fundamental concepts and the ability to apply those concepts to fight back. Learn concepts, quickly identify opportunities to apply them, and deliver them quickly and aggressively. Can you create distance? Can you kick or use an object to keep your attacker away? Are you blocking

or protecting vital and sensory organs? Are you striking vulnerable points aggressively to stop the attacker's momentum? Can you control the limb that is holding the weapon? Have you neutralized the attacker effectively?

Do not train with someone who approaches these type of attacks as "easy to deal with". It is not going to be easy. It will be a nightmare, and you could die. A knife or gun fight will be the fight of your life, so don't take it lightly. Be ready to FIGHT!

## STRESS INOCULATION

*We don't rise to the level of our expectations, we fall to the level of our training. — ARCHILOCHUS*

In order to perform well under

stress, it is necessary to simulate stress in training. But stress and intensity are usually the most difficult aspects to produce in a training scenario.

When training, you are in a "fake" combat mindset. Your unconscious knows that your life is not in danger and, even though you may be nervous, it does not compare to the real thing. You need to find creative ways to manipulate your psyche and your mentality to simulate a condition as close to real combat as possible.

## INTENSITY AND RESISTANCE

It is hard to simulate full intensity in training because you need to follow safety protocols designed to prevent

injuries. Using the best and most advanced protective gear can help you train better. Your training partner is critical to simulating intensity. It is ok to learn a technique without stress, but when you know the technique well enough, it's time to train it under stress. Your training partner must adopt the role of a real "bad guy" and simulate his attack with enough speed, power, unpredictability, and resistance. Contrary to popular belief, your partner is not doing you any favors by attacking gently and letting you win easily. He needs to make the attack "dirty" in order for you to benefit from it. For example, when attacking you with a knife, he must simulate several thrusts at high speed and try to free his arm when you try to control it. When choking or grabbing, he must try to surprise you and apply real resistance to simulate real stress. When training two attackers against one, one attacker often waits for the other to finish his or her attack. When simulating reality, you cannot wait. You must put constant pressure on your training partner in order to challenge him correctly. Remember—in real life, you won't be attacked by an old lady with osteoporosis. You will be attacked by a psychotic, blood thirsty beast in his prime. To make training efficient, you must attack with speed, surprise, intensity, and resistance.

## SURPRISE AND FATIGUE

Including a surprise element in drills is especially important because, in real life, the enemy will have free choice of time, place, and form of attack. You will most likely be reacting

to whatever the attacker dictates. To simulate surprise, common training tools include shutting the eyes before an attack, using a wall or other cover to conceal the attacker, introducing unknown adversaries, and so on.

Simulating surprise is essential to simulating the physiological responses that result from extreme stress, such as sensory deprivation and decreased mental clarity. The most commonly used element in training scenarios is increasing the heart rate through physical exercise to induce fatigue. This produces a condition similar to that which occurs during stress.

Some other techniques for inducing stress during a training scenario include the following:

- Building up to an event or a test (expectation).
- Being watched by other people or a crowd.
- Operating under time constraints.
- Introducing fear of pain or punishment.
- Inducing fatigue.

## CHOOSING A SYSTEM

*Everybody has a plan until they get punched in the mouth. — MIKE TYSON*

You need to train Krav Maga or a similar self-defense system to learn aggression and survival mindsets, defense against weapons, and other complex techniques. You also need to train traditional striking-based and grappling-based martial arts to effectively defend yourself. You may know a technique for every single

Simulating surprise is essential to simulating the physiological responses that result from extreme stress, such as sensory deprivation and decreased mental clarity.



Photo by: Fabiana Kocubey



Photo by: Fabiana Kocubey

situation, but under the stress of real life, this will not suffice.

Today, there is a major issue in commercial self-defense gyms because they do not provide effective striking or grappling training. This is the result of both clientele looking for quick fixes and trainers without the appropriate martial arts backgrounds.

There are no shortcuts. Striking and grappling are absolutely necessary because they form the base of most

street altercations. You need to become good at striking and grappling in order to handle the intensity of a crazed attacker blitzing you with punches, kicks, or takedown attempts. You need to know how to grapple your way out of situations on the ground in order to survive. Being on the ground is a tactical handicap because there may be more than one attacker and awareness and movement are limited. Commercial Krav Maga and other

self-defense systems today do not always teach striking and grappling in an effective manner. As a result, it is a good idea to train traditional martial arts in addition to specific self-defense techniques. Learn correct stand up technique such as boxing, Dutch kickboxing, Muay Thai, and Kyokushin karate. You should also learn grappling and ground work with styles like sambo, judo, wrestling, and Brazilian jiu jitsu.

My martial arts/self-defense training recommendation includes the following:

- Sign up for an MMA gym and attend one or two sessions per week.
- Sign up for Krav Maga or another technical defensive system and train there at least once a week.

## CHOOSING A DOJO

*They speak of 'This Dojo' and 'That Dojo.' They are looking for profit.*

— MIYAMOTO MUSASHI

First, you need a gym with the right values. Usually, this starts with RESPECT. Respect for you, for trainers, for country, for law enforcement, and for other techniques and schools. You need a gym that eliminates EGO. A gym where people show up to train and become better people together—not to injure each other or to show off. You need a place that will challenge you and make you harder to kill. Your body will hurt; your hands, legs, bones, and body need to be conditioned. This hurts, but you will become stronger from it and get used to it. Your hands need to become hard like rocks, like the hands of an expert Kyokushin karate fighter. Your shins, elbows, and knees need to become dangerous weapons, like those of a Muay Thai fighter. Your body and head need to become resilient to impact like those of a professional boxer. You need to

become a tougher human being. If you are not sweating or feeling sore afterward, then you are not training efficiently. Spar regularly with people who are slightly less skilled or who are similar to your level in order to improve, but challenge yourself with better people on a regular basis, too.

Commit to the way of the warrior; there are no shortcuts. •

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

*Bernardo C. has served as an active member of Israel's military and law enforcement establishment for almost 15 years. He served in various units of Israel's infantry and special forces, elite dignitary protection, and federal airline security. In recent years, Bernardo has served as a senior tactical and hand-to-hand combat instructor for Israel's special operations forces and federal protection services. He holds a graduate degree in counter terrorism and homeland security from the Interdisciplinary Center in Herzliya, Israel, and is the founder and CEO of Tsevet Lohamim (Team of Warriors), a nonprofit leadership training organization dedicated to preparing future soldiers to serve in elite units. Bernardo has extensive martial arts and self-defense training experience in Muay Thai, kickboxing, Krav Maga, and women's self-defense.*

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# VERBAL WARNING: A POTENTIAL DEADLY TRAP

by Jeff Chudwin

This is not about a fair fight;  
it is about winning against  
violent, dangerous offenders.

**A**n officer arrives on the  
scene of an active shooter.

As he enters a school building, he  
finds bloodied victims on the floor and  
runs toward the gunfire. He clears a  
corner and sees a man with a rifle firing  
at children who are running down a  
hallway. The officer raises his patrol

rifle and, without a word, shoots the  
offender.

In another deadly event, an officer  
arrives at a traffic accident. One of  
the drivers is armed with a handgun  
and, unknown to the officer, was on  
his way to murder his girlfriend. A  
citizen tells the officer that one of the

*Photo by: Alejandro Pena [Public domain]*

The use of verbal commands when facing an immediate threat to life—your life or the lives of others—is, at times, a deadly vestige of our training.

drivers is holding a pistol. The officer then shouts to the armed driver to step away from his pickup truck and show his hands. He steps from the vehicle, and the officer repeatedly shouts for him to drop the gun. The offender lowers his handgun; then, without warning, he snaps his arm up and fires. The bullet grazes the officer's head from 60 feet away. A gunfight ensues, and the officer kills the offender.

In one case, no warning is issued and the threat stops immediately. In the other, a warning is given with near-disastrous results. Are police officers always required to give warning before the use of deadly force? If not, what are the rules?

### CONSIDER YOUR BASIC TRAINING

Every police officer is taught from day one that communication skills are key to successful law enforcement. We learn to speak in a manner that commands attention when needed to gain compliance, and we learn to speak in a manner that allows us to simply give and get information.

In all that we do, speech is in play, and this is very much true in use-of-force incidents. In the vast majority of confrontations, officers are identifying themselves, giving lawful commands, and making custodial arrests. Verbal commands are ingrained into the fabric of who we are and what we do.

We prize good communication, but we must recognize that there are times that demand action rather than talk. In the classes I teach about police use of deadly force, officers watch on-scene film in which verbal commands go unheeded by an armed offender. The result is that the gunman fires first and murders the officer. The use of verbal commands when facing an immediate threat to life—your life or the lives of others—is, at times, a deadly vestige of our training.

In high-stress situations, correct and proper verbalization can be difficult. What I call “peanut butter mouth” kicks in, and all that comes out is a confused jumble of words at high volume—often followed by profanity. Do you remember your first on-foot or auto pursuit? It takes realistic training and correct practice to slow

down, keep a cool head, and use a clear tongue.

### ACHIEVE CONTROL AND WIN

Sgt. Phil Messina (NYPD, retired) is the founder of Modern Warrior, a highly regarded school that trains officers for the hardcore reality of the fights they will face in their careers. As a regular presenter at the Illinois Tactical Officers Association Training Conference, Messina has taught that achieving control and winning against violent offenders is a time-driven process.

Similar in concept to Col. John R. Boyd's OODA (observe-orient-decide-act) loop, Messina dissects the fight sequence in terms of positive and negative timeframes. Negative time works against the officer because he is seeking to catch up to the actions of the offender. A basic truth is that action beats reaction. When the command “drop the gun” is given, it is implicit in the timeframe that the offender is armed and capable of firing. He will either put the gun down as commanded or he will use the time allowed by the officer to fire. This issue of “presumed compliance” has been well explained by combative trainer Tony Blauer, who details the risk we take when issuing verbal commands and then waiting for a response. When we do so, we surrender the timeframe to the offender and stand a great risk—unless we are doing more than simply speaking and waiting.

As we work through tactics and responses, we must first understand the law. The foundation of warning an offender before the use of deadly force is the 1985 case of *Tennessee v. Garner*.<sup>1</sup>

This landmark decision addressed the use of deadly force against fleeing felony offenders. The court considered giving warning, but did not make it mandatory. Specifically, court documents state, “Thus, if the suspect threatens the officer with a weapon or there's probable cause to believe that he has committed a crime involving the infliction or threatened infliction of serious physical harm, deadly force may be used if necessary to prevent escape, and if, where feasible, some warning has been given.”<sup>2</sup>

Feasibility is based on the considerations of the officer on the

scene. There is no legal requirement that an officer allow a violent offender to gain a deadly advantage, whereby a verbal warning exposes the officer to greater dangers by allowing the offender to target the officer or others on the scene.

For example, suppose an officer arrives on the scene of a bank robbery in progress. The offender, armed with a long-barreled revolver pressed to the neck of a teller, attempts to use her as a shield to escape. The kidnapper drags his hostage along an outer wall, not seeing the police officer hidden around the 90-degree corner. The officer

immediately fires on the offender as he breaks the corner line. No words of warning or surrender were issued. Why? To use the language of the court, doing so was not feasible. To do so would have put the life of the hostage and officer at high risk. The untrained and unknowing may argue that words must come first. These people are the observers and backseat drivers who do not have to live with or suffer the consequences of failure and death.

Real life is not television where the good guy always wins. If you fail to act at the moment when death or great harm is immediate, then



Photo by: Spc. Marilyn Spencer [Public domain]

# Demonstrate the use of verbal warnings in situations where they are feasible and where they are not.



Photo by: Armando Gonzales [Public domain]

all may be lost. As police officers, we are sworn to protect the life and safety of our citizens—first and foremost. We must not elevate safety concerns for a criminal or terrorist offender above those of our citizens and ourselves. This is not about a fair fight; it is about winning against violent, dangerous offenders. Only law enforcement is empowered to do this, and we will stand or fall based not only on what we can do but, most importantly, on what we believe is acceptable and necessary conduct.

What happens when law enforcement officers are faced with the elevated threat of terrorist action?

With my officers, I review a video of a homicide bomber in Israel who is wounded by the blast of an accomplice bomber. He is on the ground attempting to press the detonator of his bomb vest when a border patrol commander bravely moves in close with his pistol and shoots him in the head, ending the threat. Words had no place in that moment and scene.

When weapons of mass destruction are threatened or used by terrorists, part of their strategy is to use negotiation to gain time to either reinforce their stronghold or carry out the attack.

## IN SUMMARY

What can be done to better train and prepare our officers for what may be a once-in-a-career event? First, we must make certain that the law is understood. To do so, department trainers must incorporate “book learning” issues in an understandable block of instruction. Videos of these events should be added to classroom time to provide a focus on the reality of these situations.

Second, classroom learning should be followed with hands-on training. Produce realistic training scenarios. Demonstrate the use of

verbal warnings in situations where they are feasible and where they are not. I’ve “shot” many officers in training who truly believed that, because they had a firearm pointed at me, they controlled me. I shot them in the head from close range even though my muzzle was depressed. These officers had to experience this in order to truly understand the action-versus-reaction cycle.

Finally, we must ensure that there is consistency with the law and department policy. I have not seen a policy that mandates a verbal warning in all matters of police use of force. However, such policies may exist

and, if they do, the department chief or sheriff needs to be informed and educated about the matter. Officers must clearly understand that there is a time for talk, but there is also a time for direct action. When shots are fired and life is at risk, it is not the time for confusion or unreasonable high-risk conduct. •

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

*Jeff Chudwin was the 2009 Law Officer Trainer of the Year. He serves as chief of police for the Village of Olympia Fields, IL. A founding member and the current president of the Illinois Tactical Officers Association and co-chair of the Illinois Law Enforcement Alarm System Region 4, Chudwin is a former assistant state’s attorney and has been a firearms, use-of-force, and emergency response trainer for more than 25 years. Contact him at lawofc400@aol.com.*

# HOW MUCH DOES ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION COST YOU?

By AMAC Staff

In 2010, the average unlawful immigrant household received around \$24,721 in government benefits and services while paying some \$10,334 in taxes.

**C**urrent unlawful immigration poses large fiscal costs for U.S. taxpayers. The government provides four types of benefits and services that are relevant to this issue.

- **Direct benefits.** These include Social Security, Medicare, unemployment insurance, and workers' compensation.
- **Means-tested welfare benefits.** There are over 80 of these

programs which—at a cost of nearly \$900 billion per year—provide cash, food, housing, medical care, and other services to roughly 100 million low-income Americans. Major programs include Medicaid, food stamps, the refundable Earned Income Tax Credit, public housing, Supplemental Security Income, and Temporary Assistance for

- **Needy Families.**
- **Public education.** At a cost of \$12,300 per pupil per year, these services are largely free or heavily subsidized for low-income parents
- **Population-based services.** Police departments, fire departments, highways, parks, and similar services generally expand as new immigrants enter a community, according to the National Academy of Sciences study of the fiscal costs of immigration. Someone has to bear the cost of that expansion.

The cost of these governmental services is far larger than many people imagine. For example, in 2010, the average U.S. household received \$31,584 in government benefits and services in these four categories.

The governmental system is highly redistributive. Well-educated households tend to be net tax contributors: The taxes they pay exceed the direct and means-tested benefits, public education, and population-based services they receive. In 2010, in the whole U.S. population, households with college-educated heads received \$24,839 in government benefits on average, while paying \$54,089 in taxes. In other words, the average college-educated household generated a fiscal surplus of \$29,250 that the government used to finance benefits for other households.

Other households are net tax consumers: The benefits they receive exceed the taxes they pay. These

households generate a fiscal deficit that must be financed by taxes from other households or by government borrowing. For example, in 2010, in the U.S. population as a whole, households headed by persons without a high school degree received \$46,582 in government benefits on average, while paying only \$11,469 in taxes. This generated an average fiscal deficit (benefits received minus taxes paid) of \$35,113.

The high deficits of poorly educated households are important in the amnesty debate because the typical unlawful immigrant has only a tenth-grade education. Half of unlawful immigrant households are headed by an individual with less than a high school education, and another 25 percent of household heads have only a high school diploma.

Some people argue that deficit figures for poorly educated households in the general population are not relevant for immigrant households. For example, many believe that lawful immigrants use little welfare. In reality, lawful immigrant households receive significantly more welfare on average than native-born households. Overall, the fiscal deficits or surpluses for lawful immigrant households are the same as or higher than those for native-born households with the same education level. Poorly educated households, whether immigrant or native-born, receive far more in government benefits than they pay in taxes.

In contrast to lawful immigrants, unlawful immigrants at present do not have access to means-tested welfare, Social Security, or Medicare. This does not mean, however, that they do not receive government benefits and services. Children in unlawful immigrant households receive heavily subsidized public education. Many unlawful immigrants have children who are born in the United States; these children are currently eligible for the full range of government welfare and medical benefits. And, of course, when unlawful immigrants live in a community, they use roads, parks, sewers, police protection, and fire protection. These services must expand to cover the added population or there will be "congestion" effects that lead to a decline in service quality.

In 2010, the average unlawful immigrant household received around \$24,721 in government benefits and services while paying some \$10,334 in taxes. This generated an average annual fiscal deficit of around \$14,387 per household. This cost was borne by U.S. taxpayers. Amnesty would provide unlawful households with access to over 80 means-tested welfare programs, Obamacare, Social Security, and Medicare. The fiscal deficit for each household would soar.

If enacted, amnesty would be implemented in phases. During the first or interim phase (which would likely last 13 years), unlawful immigrants would be given lawful status but would be

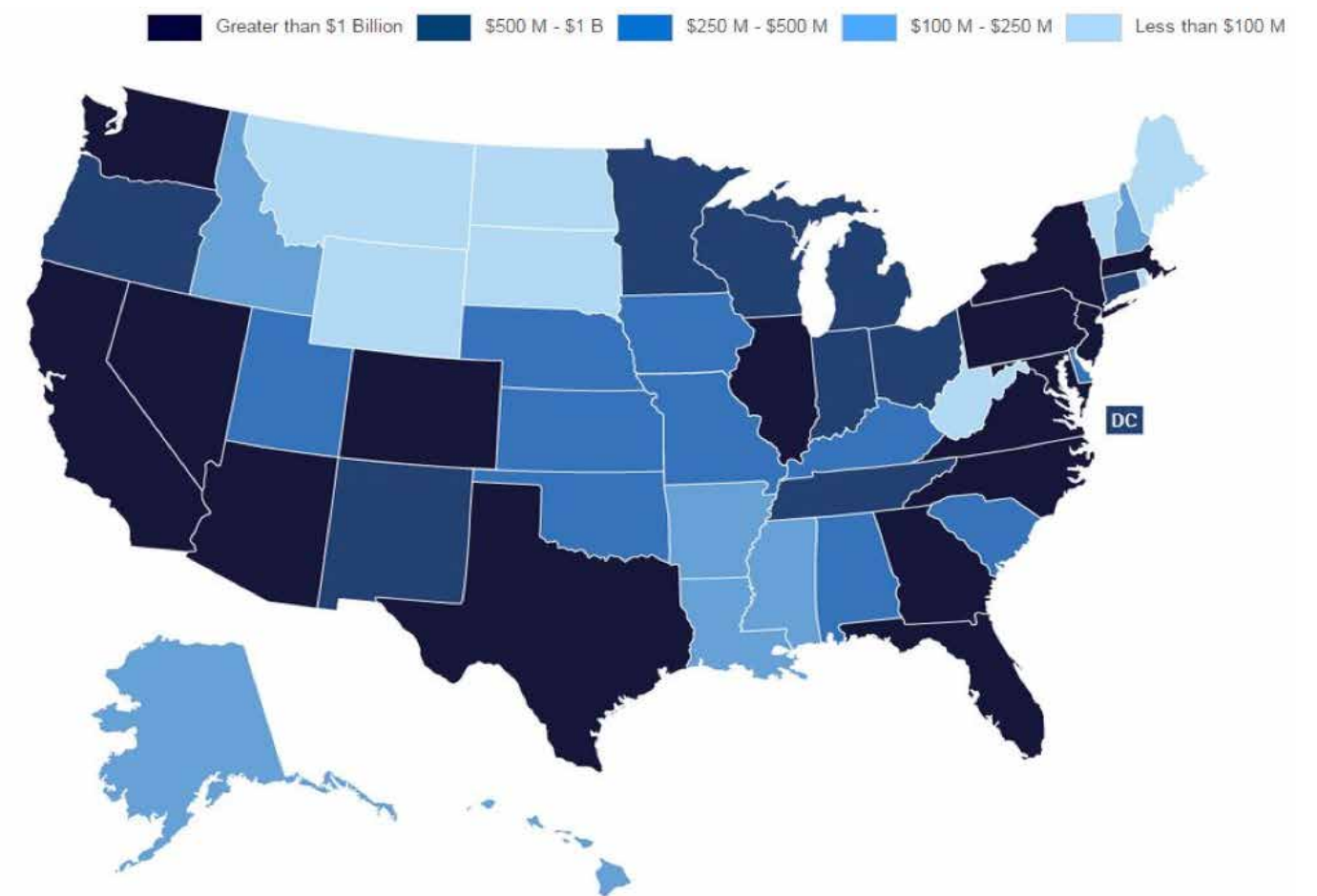
denied access to means-tested welfare and Obamacare. Most analysts assume that roughly half of unlawful immigrants work "off the books" and therefore do not pay income or FICA taxes. During the interim phase, these "off the books" workers would have a strong incentive to move to "on the books" employment. In addition, their wages would likely go up because they could seek jobs in a more open environment. As a result, during the

interim period, tax payments would rise and the average fiscal deficit among former unlawful immigrant households would fall.

After 13 years, unlawful immigrants would become eligible for means-tested welfare and Obamacare. At that point or shortly thereafter, former unlawful immigrant households would likely begin to receive government benefits at the same rate as lawful immigrant households of the same education

level. As a result, government spending and fiscal deficits would increase dramatically.

The final phase of amnesty is retirement. Unlawful immigrants are not currently eligible for Social Security and Medicare, but under amnesty they would become so. The cost of this change would be very large indeed. •



Immigration Map - From Heritage.org <http://www.heritage.org/>



# TWENTY THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT NIGHT VISION

By Editorial Staff

*There's more to night vision than just turning on the system and looking through it.*

Night vision has become an essential tool for the U.S. military. Pilots fly fighter planes and helicopters with night vision devices. Soldiers on the ground in Afghanistan use night vision goggles to spot and eliminate Taliban insurgents. Even unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) have the latest thermal cameras.

These tools are less ubiquitous in law enforcement, but they are becoming more common as the price of the technology falls. However, many law enforcement agencies are still confused about what night vision can and cannot do and what they need to know before buying it.

**1. What Should I Call It?**

One of the most confusing things about night vision is what to call it. There are two primary types of night vision: image intensifier tube devices and infrared (thermal) devices. It is a common misconception that only the image intensifier systems—called I<sup>2</sup> systems in the industry—should be referred to as night vision.

**2. What's the Difference?**

An image intensifier night vision device is an optical device that does exactly what the name suggests: It takes available light and intensifies it. The latest I<sup>2</sup> systems can work in pitch darkness. Infrared systems measure differences in heat and produce an electronic image of the objects radiating that heat.

**3. How Does I<sup>2</sup> Night Vision Work?**

I<sup>2</sup> technology magnifies the amount of received photons (light packets) from sources such as starlight and moonlight. Incoming light strikes a photocathode plate inside the image intensifier tube. The photons are then magnified and transmitted through a vacuum tube, where they strike a microchannel plate. This causes the image to illuminate a picture in the same pattern as the light striking the photocathode. Resolution in I<sup>2</sup> devices is measured in line pairs per millimeter (lp/mm).

**4. How Does Thermal Night Vision Work?**

Handheld thermal or infrared night vision systems use a sensor called a microbolometer that reads the difference in temperature between

an object and its environment to create an image of that object. The data from the microbolometer is sent to a display so the operator can see it. Thermal night vision is not optical.

**5. What Are the I<sup>2</sup> Generations?**

Generation 0 (Gen 0) and Generation 1 (Gen 1) were the earliest night vision devices. They are no longer relevant  
Generation 2 (Gen 2) devices

are much brighter and much more capable of light intensification than Gen 1 devices. They are also much smaller thanks to improved microchannel plate and photocathode plate technology. Gen 2 devices were supplied to NATO allies by the U.S. military, and the technology was copied and improved by the Soviets to create Gen 2+. Today, excellent Gen 2+ systems are still being produced in Russia,

Belarus, and Western Europe.

Generation 3 (Gen 3) devices provide up to 15,000 hours of use and offer excellent light intensification. Gen 3 tubes cannot be exported outside of the U.S. except by direct permission of the Department of Defense. The latest Gen 3 systems are Gen 3+ and Gen 3 Pinnacle. All Gen 3 tubes are made by Exelis or EOTech regardless of who makes the complete system.

**6. What Is Auto-Gating?**

Auto-gating prevents bright lights from whiting out the night vision system or causing temporary blindness of the operator. It also helps the I<sup>2</sup> tube maintain the highest possible resolution during a variety of light conditions. Auto-gating is especially important on I<sup>2</sup> systems that are used for aviation or in rifle optics. Although it is a feature of later Gen 3 tubes, auto-gating can also be found on some Gen 2+ systems.

**7. What Good Is This Stuff?**

There are many applications for both I<sup>2</sup> and thermal night vision in law enforcement. I<sup>2</sup> is an excellent tool for surveillance, sniper overwatch, SWAT operations, searches of darkened warehouses, and simply seeing what people are doing in the dark. Thermal systems can be used for search and rescue, evidence recovery (tossed items glow with the heat of a suspect's hands for some time after they are discarded), detection of recently driven cars in a parking lot, and identification of "grow" operations inside a house.

Both I<sup>2</sup> and thermal also have some drawbacks. I<sup>2</sup> can be hampered by streetlights and house lights in urban areas. It also cannot see through smoke, fog, heavy rain, snow, or other obscurants. Thermal can see through smoke and other obscurants, but it is foiled by window and windshield glass. More importantly, thermal cannot produce an image sharp enough for a positive ID. It can show you that someone is driving out in the woods with a pistol, but it cannot show you who is driving.

**8. What Does I<sup>2</sup> Cost?**

When discussing I<sup>2</sup> systems, it all comes down to quality. The question of quality is not just about the image intensifier tubes; it is also about the optics and the features. The most popular image intensification tools used by law enforcement are the PVS-14 monocular systems and a wide array of variants of this platform. A good Gen 2+ monocular system will run about \$2,000. For a Gen 3 monocular, the price is around \$4,000. Additional features on these systems—especially dedicated weapon sights and attachments—can raise the price substantially.

**9. What Does Thermal Cost?**

Three years ago, handheld thermal camera systems suitable for law enforcement operations cost as much as \$10,000. Then FLIR, the company that makes most of the microbolometers used in handheld thermal systems, started to sell large quantities of infrared sensors to

luxury car makers. This mass use of infrared sensors has resulted in lower prices for basic handheld thermal cameras. The current price is around \$4,000 for a good quality system.

**10. How Do I Judge Night Vision Quality?**

Determining the quality of thermal systems is easy: It's all about resolution, with 640 x 480 usually being the best for handhelds. A good system is 320 x 240, and there are many applications where 240 x 180 is sufficient. Each increase in resolution adds about \$1,000 in cost to the average handheld unit. It is also important to consider features such as still and video capture.

Judging the quality of I<sup>2</sup> equipment is considerably more complicated. The quality of any I<sup>2</sup> tool is determined by its optical characteristics as well as its image intensifier tube. If you pair the best Gen 3 tube on the market with lousy optics, you'll have a lousy system. So, the optics are as much of a concern as the tube. This is especially true at the edges of the image area to prevent distortion or a fisheye effect. Resolution on an I<sup>2</sup> system is measured in lp/mm, with 64 to 72 lp/mm being the gold standard. Most applications do not require resolution that sharp; in fact, some experts argue that this level of resolution exceeds the capability of the human eye. Most experts recommend a resolution of 45 lp/mm for most operations.

**11. Can I Test It Before I Buy?**

Most sellers of law enforcement



*US Air Force from USA [Public domain]*



night vision equipment have strong test and evaluation (T&E) programs. Many will even allow you to use the equipment on operations before you buy. Check with your vendor. Then, turn the equipment over to your most knowledgeable night vision operator for a thorough test.

### 12. How Do Agencies Afford This Stuff?

There are a variety of ways that law enforcement agencies come up with the funds for acquiring night vision capabilities. Some agencies benefit from special funds set up by affluent citizens or groups of affluent citizens that permit them to purchase equipment like night vision. Others use grants like the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) grant from the Department of Homeland Security. Another source of night vision funding is asset forfeiture. Finally, some agencies budget for the purchase of the equipment.

### 13. Are There Cheaper Alternatives?

There absolutely are cheaper options and you may want to consider them. It's important to remember that I2 night vision was developed for use on remote battlefields where the only illumination is starlight or moonlight. You may not need that kind of image intensification. Digital camera sensors such as a charge-coupled device (CCD) or complementary metal-oxide semiconductor (CMOS) can provide substantial low-light capabilities. Low-light imaging systems using these sensors sell for less than \$500, and they can be excellent tools for patrol officers in urban or well-lit areas who want to see what's going on in the shadows. Under such conditions, they can be even more effective than I2 night vision.

### 14. How Do I Care for Night Vision?

Don't drop night vision equipment. Don't store it for long periods of

time with batteries in it. Keep the lens covers on until you're ready to use it. Most night vision systems come with protective cases; use them. Finally, when possible, cover the optics with clear glass filters. These "sacrificial windows" will protect your lenses from scratches and dirt. Thermal systems are solid state, so there's not much to break. Just don't drop them.

### 15. Do I Need Special Training?

Anybody can put on an I2 device and wander around in the dark. But, to get the most out of your equipment, invest in training as well as equipment. Some sellers offer training. You may also have former military operatives in your agency who can train the rest of your officers. Finally, you may want to hire a training company. Your I2 vendor can probably recommend one.

### 16. How Long Do Night Vision Devices Last?

Thermal cameras are solid state and can last a lifetime with proper care. I2 systems have a finite lifespan because of the coatings on the tubes. A good Gen 2+ system should give you as much as 5,000 hours of use. A Gen 3 system can give you as much as 15,000 hours of operation, but 12,000 hours is more likely. If you want to extend the life of I2 equipment, shut it off when not in use.

### 17. Why Is I2 Green?

Long ago, it was determined that green and black give the most detail in night vision systems. But systems do not have to be green and black. Some systems use black and white images, which some users prefer. These users say the black and white

is not as bright and does not fatigue their eyes as much as the green and black.

### 18. How Do I Preserve My Natural Night Vision?

There is a belief that pirates wore patches over one eye so they would always have one eye adjusted to the dark. This is untrue, but preserving natural night vision is the reason why the U.S. military prefers monoculars for ground operations.

### 19. What About Combination Thermal-I2 Systems?

Exelis makes the Dual Sensor Night Vision Goggle (DSNVG). It is exceedingly cool. It can be used as a Gen 3 I2 system and as a thermal camera. More importantly, flipping

a switch on the device fuses the two images together. That makes it possible to see a heat signature through smoke or fog and to see an assailant hiding behind glass. However, there are two major drawbacks to this equipment: It is hard to get because the military is buying it up, and it is expensive at more than \$10,000.

### 20. What's Next in Night Vision?

Get ready to hear a lot about Short Wave Infrared (SWIR) in the near future. This is the infrared camera of the future, and it has the potential to change night vision as we know it. These infrared systems have such high resolution that they can be used to make a positive ID of a suspect. •

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## PRODUCT REVIEW

# Off Body Carry Considerations and Best Practices: VERTX Transit Sling Bag Review

by Karim Manassa

Experience dictates on-body carry of your EDC (every day carry) kit whenever possible. Doing so provides custody, positive control, and rapid access to your kit at all times.

In the real world, however, there are a few special situations in which off-body carry is the only option. Examples include working out at a gym or visiting a health professional who provides hands-on care, such as a physical therapist, massage therapist, chiropractor, or physician conducting an annual physical exam.

An important consideration with off-body carry is that the user must maintain close contact with the EDC bag at all times, which means going to the beach and leaving it unattended near your cooler while swimming is not an option. Indeed, even the positioning of the bag on the body for optimum rapid access must be reviewed and practiced.

When searching for an off-body solution, this video demonstrating the Vertx Transit Sling Bag ([www.vertx.com](http://www.vertx.com)) caught my attention, both because of the bag's efficacy and its low profile: [https://youtu.be/Tbf3OAOgm\\_8?t=9m17s](https://youtu.be/Tbf3OAOgm_8?t=9m17s).

I subsequently purchased this bag and chose to outfit it as a dedicated off-body EDC bag. If you want all of the details about this bag, please watch the aforementioned video in its entirety.

Because I chose to use this as a dedicated EDC bag, I purpose built

the two main compartments to serve this function. The outer compartment holds medical supplies, including TQ; shears; and a red pouch containing gloves, chest

seals, two packs of gauze, and an Israeli bandage. The inner compartment (the one with the specially designed zipper tab) uses Vertx's Tactical Origami system to hold



Measuring 17" x 11" x 6", the Vertx Transit Sling Bag is just the right size for essentials.

weaponry, including a Glock 19, a spare magazine, and a Streamlight HL-X.

When using this bag for off-body EDC, it is important to practice rapidly accessing the inner compartment in order to determine placement and angles of each item in relation to where the bag opens on the user's body. This enables the user to make sure the items don't interfere with each other while at the same time allowing for rapid access. It is also important for the user to practice drawing and holstering dry fire to ensure the support hand is not muzzled in the process.

I have this bag ready to go at all times, minus the Glock 19 and spare mag. When I want to use it, I simply insert these two items and go.

If you are looking for a low profile, well-thought-out off-body system for special situations, I strongly recommend giving this bag a look. Of course, you don't have to configure it the way I did, choosing instead to cross-utilize it for other more mundane tasks. In my case, I felt keeping it simple while at the same time replicating my on-body EDC kit was the way to go. •

\*\*\* To ensure an agnostic review process, we receive ZERO remuneration nor consideration from the vendors. \*\*\*

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Karim Manassa owns EDC Pistol Training, a South Florida based training company specializing in solo self-responder training for civilians and off-duty law enforcement. Comprised of five instructors from different lanes, EDC provides a comprehensive program of live fire, force on force, and care under fire training. Please visit our site at [www.edcpistoltraining.com](http://www.edcpistoltraining.com).



Outer Compartment dedicated for medical kit.



User view of inner compartment dedicated for weapons kit when slung. A specially designed zipper pull tab facilitates rapid access.



Opponent's view of inner compartment dedicated for weapons kit when slung.

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35	<b>Advanced Homeland Security Training in Israel •</b> <a href="http://www.homelandsecurityssi.com">www.homelandsecurityssi.com</a> ..	215
13	<b>EDC Training •</b> <a href="http://www.edcpistoltraining.com">www.edcpistoltraining.com</a> .....	118
39	<b>Elevated tactics by SSI •</b> <a href="http://www.homelandsecurityssi.com">www.homelandsecurityssi.com</a> .....	313
5	<b>Patriot3 •</b> <a href="http://www.patriot3.com">www.patriot3.com</a> .....	301
42	<b>Phantom Products Inc. •</b> <a href="http://www.phantomlights.com">www.phantomlights.com</a> .....	209
33	<b>Police K9 Magazine •</b> <a href="http://www.k9copmagazine.com">www.k9copmagazine.com</a> .....	277
41	<b>SSI PVB •</b> <a href="http://www.SSIPVB.com">www.SSIPVB.com</a> .....	226
2	<b>GLOCK HOLSTER •</b> <a href="http://www.homeland-security-network.myshopify.com/products/glockholster">www.homeland-security-network.myshopify.com/products/glockholster</a> ..	303

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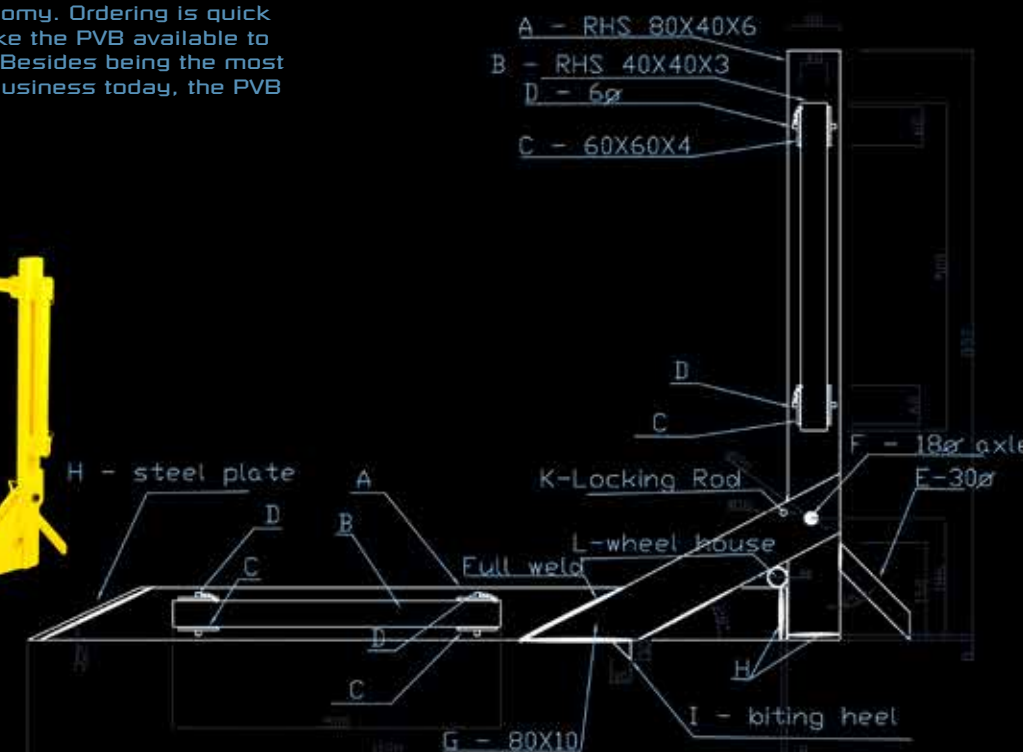
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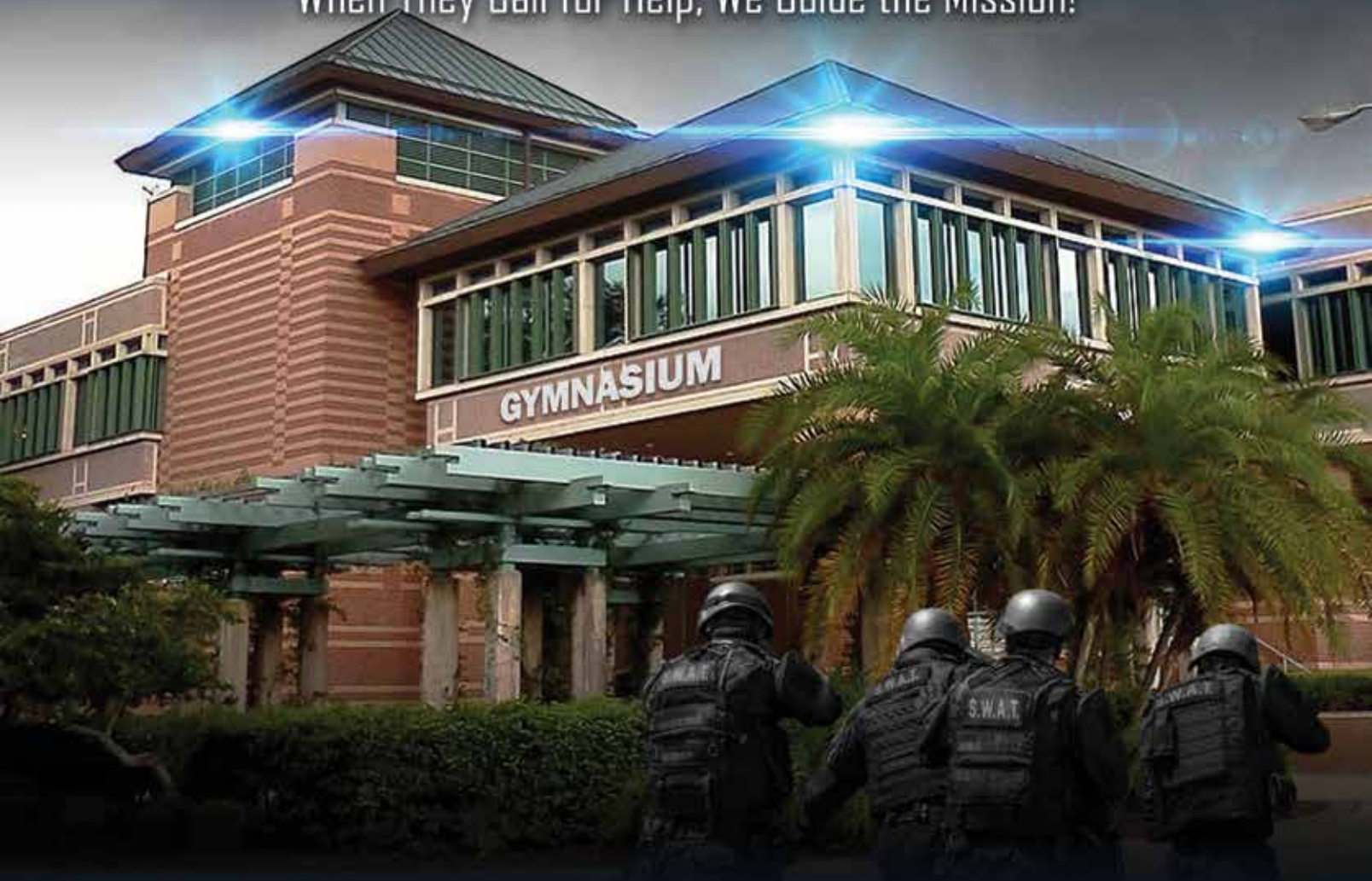
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