

**Los Angeles Police Department  
De-escalation & Tactical Decision Making  
Expanded Course Outline  
1850-20182**

**Instructional Goal:** To teach students how to better integrate tactical de-escalation techniques, less lethal devices, strategic communication techniques, and command and control tactics to preserve human life, reduce the intensity of tense encounters with violent suspects, and mitigate the need for a higher level of force.

**Performance Objectives:**

- By the conclusion of the training, students will understand how the application of this training is in keeping with our Department's UOF policy, philosophy and tactical planning.
- The student will demonstrate an understanding of how our Department's guiding principle of Reverence for Human Life is the moral and ethical foundation of de-escalation, tactics, reasonable force, and officer safety.
- Students will demonstrate an understanding and articulation of the Use of Force Policy regarding less lethal options as outlined in the most current Tactical Directives for Taser, OC Spray, Bean Bag, 40 mm, and Baton
- Students will recognize force options and the amount of proportional force peace officers may use based on the subject's resistance
- Students will demonstrate the importance of effective tactical communication before, during, and after using force

**I. INTRODUCTION**

**(30 minutes)**

- A. Introduction
  - 1. Course coordinator and director
  - 2. Instructors/facilitators
- B. Course Overview
  - 1. "Cold" scenarios
  - 2. Case Study Assessment – Maximizing the Use of PATROL
  - 3. Command and Control
    - a. Overview of Training Bulletins
    - b. How Command and Control leads to De-escalation
    - c. Advantages of strategic communication
  - 4. Use of Force Overview and Legal Update
    - a. Recently Updated Tactical Directives
    - b. Legal Update – Clarification
  - 5. Lunch
  - 6. Field Training Exercises - Students will demonstrate an understanding of the department's UOF, de-escalation techniques, command and control, and strategic communication techniques in small groups.
  - 7. Debrief/POST Rosters/Closing

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- C. Safety Guidelines/Orientation                      IIPP Guidelines
1. Discuss Safety Requirements for Reality Based and Scenario Training
  2. "Weapons Check" consistent with which is Safety Orientation
  3. Safety guidelines apply to all training given by the Department. These guidelines are to ensure that staff and participants are aware of potentially hazardous situations and how to avoid it.
  4. These guidelines will be discussed and distributed to each student, instructor and coordinator to ensure they are followed.
  5. Anyone participating in the training, whether student, observer, or instructor, has the authority to "STOP" the exercise if they observe an unsafe act or condition that may cause imminent injury or death and/or damage to the facilities.
  6. Students shall immediately notify an instructor(s), or the training staff of any injury sustained during training, and use the following steps in the event of a serious injury
  7. Render first aid and obtain appropriate medical assistance. Notify the Fire Department rescue ambulance (818-756-8675) via telephone, cellular phone, or police radio. Give specific directions to the location of the incident.
  8. In case of a serious injury, all IIPP notifications and protocol shall be followed.
  9. At each training location, there is a notebook located in the training unit's office also containing the emergency plan that is in place.
  10. The Supervisor will ensure that the necessary Worker Compensation forms (PDAS-43) and other reports (Employee Notification Form / 15.7) are completed in a timely manner.
  11. All students that are **full duty** will participate in exercises.
  12. Duty restrictions: use common sense, if something hurts, stop and report it to an instructor, assess pre-existing injury.
  13. No weapons, no live ammo, and no OC spray during drills anywhere near the training site. Weapons and ammo should be locked and secured in a separate location.
  14. If there is a security risk in the area used for training, a designated guarding officer shall be armed, and their sole responsibility is to protect the area. At no time is the designated guarding officer allowed to participate in any training while assigned to this detail.
  15. Instructors are responsible for conducting safety inspections or otherwise reviewing and assessing the safety of the equipment and facilities used for training.
  16. Instructors are aware of environmental factors such as weather or air quality and adjust the instruction as necessary.
  17. A check of the surroundings before drills is recommended to determine if there are uneven surfaces or hazards that have the potential to cause injuries.

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18. Students are required to report all injuries immediately to an instructor or supervisor. In case of serious injury, the Los Angeles City Fire Department is immediately notified by broadcasting and requesting a rescue ambulance, or by calling 911.
19. A list of local contract hospitals should be maintained and available to all instructors. All injured personnel are accompanied to the hospital by a supervisor. In the event a student is transported by ambulance a supervisor shall respond to the hospital without delay.
20. Specific Safety Considerations for each rotation will be reviewed prior to that Field training exercise.

**II. TACTICAL DE-ESCALATION REVIEW**

**(60 minutes)**

- A. Define Tactical De-Escalation
  1. Present Policy on the use of Force
  2. Present Use of Force Tactics Directive 16
- B. Group Discussion- P.A.T.R.O.L
  1. Instructor will facilitate class discussion on each of the letters of the P.A.T.R.O.L acronym (**PSP IV Strat Com a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i**)
    - a. Planning (**PSP IV Strat Com a, h**)
    - b. Assessment (**PSP IV Strat Com a, e**)
    - c. Time (**PSP IV Strat Com b**)
    - d. Redeployment and/or Containment (**PSP IV Strat Com b, c**)
    - e. Other Resources (**PSP IV Strat Com a, c, h**)
    - f. Lines of Communication (**PSP IV Strat Com a, c, d, h**)
- C. Weapons Other Than Firearms (**PSP IV Strat Com, a, b, c, h**) (**PSP V UOF c, d, e**)
  1. Assessing suspect's ability to inflict injury or death with the weapon
  2. Redeployment
    - a. Distance + Cover = Time
    - b. Time = Options
  3. Availability of multiple less-lethal options if available
- D. Tactical Communication Techniques
  1. Elements of tactical communication
  2. Active listening techniques
  3. Contact officer considerations
  4. Team communication during an incident

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**III. COMMAND AND CONTROL REVIEW**

**(30 minutes)**

A. Definition

1. Command and Control is the use of active leadership to direct others while using available resources to coordinate a response, accomplish tasks and minimize risk.
2. Command uses active leadership to establish order, provide stability and structure, set objectives and create conditions under which the function of control can be achieved with minimal risk.
3. Control implements the plan of action while continuously assessing the situation, making necessary adjustments, managing resources, managing the scope of the incident (containment), and evaluating whether existing Department protocols apply to the incident.
  - a. There are four key components to Command and Control:
  - b. Active Leadership – Using clear, concise, and unambiguous communication to develop and implement a plan, direct personnel, and manage resources.
4. Using Available Resources – Identifying and managing those resources that are needed to plan and implement the desired course of action.
5. Accomplishing Tasks – Breaking down a plan of action into smaller objectives and using personnel and resources to meet those objectives.
6. Minimize Risk – Taking appropriate actions to mitigate risk exposure to those impacted by the incident, including the community and first responders.

B. Expectations

1. Initial Responsibility
  - a. The senior officer, or any officer on-scene who has gained sufficient situational awareness, shall establish Command and Control and begin the process to develop a plan of action.
  - b. Generally, the person responsible for establishing Command and Control will declare themselves the Incident Commander (IC) and initiate the Incident Command System (ICS).
  - c. One of the primary responsibilities for the officer initiating Command and Control is the direction and guidance of subordinate personnel
2. Ensuring reasonable numbers of Designated Cover Officers (DCO) for both lethal and less-lethal cover.

**Note:** Reverence for human life is the primary consideration in developing tactics and strategies to resolve critical incidents. Regarding lethal force, an essential goal of Command and Control is to manage the number of officers who are assigned

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lethal cover responsibilities. In the event of an officer-involved shooting, the reasonable management of lethal cover will help lessen both the number of officers who discharge their firearms and the number of rounds fired. Consequently, danger to the community may also be reduced by minimizing the number of rounds fired. Although guided by the person who has assumed Command and Control, each individual officer is ultimately responsible for articulating the reasonableness of their decision to draw, exhibit, or discharge their firearm.

3. Reducing over-response or over-deployment to specific duties and responsibilities.
  4. Maintaining officer safety through personnel location and assignment.
- C. Individual Officer Responsibility
1. All officers on scene, at some level, are responsible for Command and Control. In addition to their initial assessment, individual officers must identify the IC - or whomever is responsible for Command and Control at that time.
    - a. While taking appropriate action based on their assessments, officers must be ready for, and receptive to, direction and orders from the IC. **(PSP IV Strat Com a, c, h)**
    - b. Every officer plays a crucial role in the management and handling of critical incidents and must understand their role within the Command and Control scheme.
    - c. Officers should be ready to deploy or re-deploy as necessary.
- D. Fulfilling ancillary roles as opposed to automatically deploying as lethal cover serves to:
1. Reduce simultaneous commands to subjects or suspects **(PSP IV Strat Com b, c, f)**
  2. Reduce the possibility of excessive amounts of lethal force being deployed **(PSP IV Strat Com a, h) (PSP V UOF c, d, e)**
  3. Potentially reduce danger to the community **(PSP V UOF c, d, e)**
  4. Minimize the potential for contagious fire **(PSP V UOF c, d, e)**
  5. Ensure deployment of less-lethal options **(PSP V UOF c, d, e)**
  6. Reduce over-response or over-deployment to specific duties and responsibilities. **(PSP V UOF c, d, e)**
- Note:** Over-response includes response to an incident where a “Code Four” has been previously broadcast. Officers should avoid responding to incidents where a “Code Four” has already been broadcast.
- E. Individual officers are responsible for assessing their role continuously during a critical incident. Because incidents can be fluid and change rapidly, officers must consistently assess their role and adapt when appropriate.
- F. Preliminary considerations

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1. Preservation of Life **(PSP V UOF d)**
    - a. Concurrent with the goal of containment, officers must assess any immediate danger to the community and to initial responders. **(PSP V UOF c, d, e)**
    - b. Following the assessment, the IC must direct available personnel and coordinate appropriate measures to mitigate the threat.
    - c. Immediate threats may include: **(PSP V UOF c, d, e)**
      - 1) Outstanding and possibly armed suspect/s
      - 2) Active shooter/s
      - 3) Environmental hazards (fires, flooding, downed power lines, etc.)
      - 4) Those in need of immediate medical care
      - 5) Multiple victims – establish triage and request medical response
      - 6) Establish force protection for fire personnel, if necessary
      - 7) After appropriate measures have been taken to mitigate risks and preserve human life, the officer who established Command and Control should continue to develop a plan. The plan should include the assignment of tasks to available personnel and the organized use of available resources.
  2. Making Decisions
    - a. Decision-making is a principal component of leadership and Command and Control.
    - b. Every Los Angeles Police Officer, regardless of rank or position, is a leader.
      - 1) Leadership requires an ability to make rapid, logical, and reasoned recommendations and decisions, based on consideration of the potential risks and benefits involved in various courses of action.
      - 2) Often, decisions are made during high-stress situations. Consequently, one must react appropriately and immediately to rapidly developing situations by instantaneously calling upon experience, training, and knowledge to formulate and then implement strategies.
    - c. Officers are expected to exercise leadership, make timely decisions, and accept responsibility for their decisions regardless of outcome.
- G. Establishing command and control
1. Implementing Command and Control involves utilizing active leadership to use available resources, accomplish tasks, and minimize risk.

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2. Major events or incidents that require Command and Control include both natural disasters and tactical situations.
  3. Existing Department concepts can be used as tools to aid in establishing Command and Control, based on the type and complexity of the incident. For example, the PATROL acronym.
- H. Incident command system
1. The Incident Command System (ICS) is the primary tool used by the Department to implement Command and Control.
  2. ICS has the flexibility and adaptability to be applied to the management of almost any incident.
    - a. It provides a scalable, standardized framework to manage incidents, and can be applied to both small incidents and large multi-agency incidents or events.
    - b. ICS allows the IC to quickly organize resources, assess information, plan and set operational goals, and assert a clear command structure from which to manage the incident or event.
  3. Just as with the key component of accomplishing tasks, the IC should strive to, in ICS terms, manage by objectives.
  4. ICS incorporates five management functions to help the IC maintain control over and incident:
    - a. Incident Command
    - b. Operations
    - c. Planning
    - d. Logistics
    - e. Administration/ Finance
  5. Span of Control
    - a. As the incident grows and the IC recognizes that they will soon be overwhelmed by a particular function, they will appoint a person to manage that function.
    - b. That appointment allows the IC to maintain control of the incident and all assigned resources.
- I. Narrating on Body Worn Video (BWV) (**PSP IV Strat Com c, h**)
1. Benefits of narrating on BWV
  2. Continuously document planning and communication between officers
  3. When feasible, narrate all phases of P.A.T.R.O.L.

**Note:** There is no specific rank requirement to assume the role of an IC, establish a command post or initiate the ICS. Initially, the senior officer or highest-ranking person at scene will take responsibility and act as the IC. Officers, supervisors and command staff should think in terms of Command and Control when responding to an incident or event.

- J. Supervisor's responsibility

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1. Responsibility for Command and Control lies with the senior officer or any officer on scene who has gained sufficient situational awareness.
2. Supervisors shall take responsibility for exercising Command and Control.
3. Supervisors shall also declare themselves the IC until relieved by a higher authority.
4. It is the expectation of this Department that the highest-ranking supervisor at scene assume the role of IC and communicate the transfer of command to all personnel involved.

**Note:** Although it is preferable for a supervisor to establish Command and Control, any officer or first responder can fill that role given sufficient situational awareness and the ability to actively lead personnel through the four key components of Command and Control.

**IV. USE OF FORCE REVIEW**

**(30 Minutes)**

- A. Primary focus – Officer and Community Collaboration – peaceful resolution to any encounter regardless of outcome or arrest.
  1. Reverence for human life must be our guiding principle in all situations:  
**(PSP V UOF d)**
    - a. Officers' lives
    - b. Suspects' lives
    - c. The community and the people we serve
    - d. Whenever safe and prudent to do so, utilize all your tactical de-escalation techniques to gain voluntary compliance
  2. Law and policy review **(PSP V UOF a, b, c)**
    - a. You must have reasonable cause to believe that the person to be arrested has committed a public offense
    - b. Only reasonable force may be used to effect an arrest, prevent escape or overcome resistance [20.II.C]
    - c. The importance of using effective communication when using force [20.II.E]
    - d. Constant training and ongoing practice is essential when responding to potentially dangerous situations that may require the use of force [20.II.D]
  3. Force can be used to effect and arrest, prevent escape and overcome resistance (835 (a) PC) [20.I.A][20.I.D] [12]
- B. Use of Force Policy<sup>1</sup> **(PSP V UOF a, b, c, d)**
  1. Reverence For Human Life is found in the Preamble for Use of Force Policy

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<sup>1</sup> Department Manual, 1/556.10, Policy on the Use of Force

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2. Graham vs. Connor<sup>2</sup> **(PSP V UOF a, b)**
  - a. Objective reasonableness guidelines
  - b. No Hindsight 20/20
  - c. Judged through the perspective of a reasonable officer
  - d. Based on totality of facts known at the time
  - e. Officer with similar training and experience facing similar circumstances
  - f. Does not have to be the best decision just a reasonable decision
  - g. AB 392 – Reasonable and necessary
3. 835(a)PC- Force can be used to;<sup>3</sup> **(PSP V UOF a)**
  - a. Effect an arrest;
  - b. Prevent Escape; and
  - c. Overcome resistance.
  - d. 835(a) PC is consistent with and in support of the Fourth Amendment
  - e. Only reasonable force may be used to effect an arrest, prevent escape or overcome resistance.
  - f. You must have reasonable suspicion to believe that the person to be arrested has committed a public offense.
4. Tactical De-escalation policy<sup>4</sup> **(PSP V PSP c, e)**
  1. Mitigate the need to use a higher level of force
  2. Persuade a person to comply by following procedures
  3. Officers shall attempt to control an incident using:
    - a. Time
    - b. Distance
    - c. Communications
    - d. And Available resources
  4. In an effort to de-escalate the situation
  5. Whenever it is safe and reasonable to do so
5. Strategic Communications within the use of force guidelines
6. Verbal warning **(PSP V UOF a, b, c, d, e)**
  - a. Verbal warning shall be given, “when feasible,” to a suspect(s) before any impact device is used, that poses a significant risk of serious injury.
  - b. The communications/verbalization officer should issue the verbal warning, informing the suspect(s) that failure to comply will result in the use of impact munitions (sponge round).

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<sup>2</sup> US Supreme Court, *Graham v Connor* 490U.S 386(1989)

<sup>3</sup> California Penal Code Section 835(a)

<sup>4</sup> Use of Force-Tactics Directive 16, Tactical De-Escalation Techniques

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- c. Verbal warning shall be given in an attempt to de-escalate the situation. The verbal warning will include a command and a warning of potential consequences of the use of force.
  - d. Command should be similar to, "Drop the weapon," or "Stop what you are doing," followed by, "Or we may use the 40mm Launcher, which may cause you serious injury."
7. Warning is not required when: **(PSP V UOF b, c)**
- a. An officer is attacked and must respond to the suspect's actions;
  - b. Insufficient time to give the warning;
  - c. Tactical plan requires the element of surprise.
  - d. Example, hostage situation or suicidal subject.
8. The verbal warning, or why it was not given, must be documented.
- a. Verbal warning given
    - 1. Identity of officer giving the warning; and,
    - 2. What was said in the warning.
    - 3. Documented in the Non-Categorical Use of Force Report, Form 1.67.05, under the Use of Force Summary heading.
  - b. No verbal warning given
    - 1. Explanation shall be documented with an appropriate justification.
    - 2. Simply stating, "The element of surprise was needed," or "For officer safety reasons," is not sufficient.
    - 3. Explanation must clearly articulate the reason the element of surprise, officer safety considerations, or any other appropriate reason caused the officer to not provide the warning.
9. Less Lethal Options<sup>5</sup> **(PSP V UOF c, d, e)**
- a. 40mm Sponge Round
    - 1. Currently the 40mm "eXact Impact" sponge round ammunition is authorized.
    - 2. Aluminum case with a black plastic and blue sponge projectile.
    - 3. The black plastic base of the projectile contacts the lands in the barrel of the launcher; this imparts a stabilizing spin for increased accuracy.
    - 4. Velocity and energy levels are maintained over a wide range of distances due to the aerodynamic shape of the projectile.
    - 5. Smokeless powder is used as the propellant; this reduces barrel fouling and eliminated the cloud of smoke that black powder ammunition produces.

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<sup>5</sup> LAPD Use of Force-Tactics Directive 17, 40mm Less-Lethal Launcher

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6. Weight: 30 grams (460 grains)
  7. Diameter: 40mm (1.6 inches)
  8. Frontal surface area: 2 square inches
  9. Velocity/Energy muzzle: 325 feet per second/108-foot pounds.
  10. Effective range of 5-110 feet that allows for both a long standoff distance and close quarters deployment.
  11. Minimum range of 5 feet (manufacturer recommendation).
  12. Very accurate less lethal option. The launcher's barrel is rifled which spins the projectile and stabilizes it, unlike the 37/38mm launcher.
  13. Single shot action. The manipulation skill of the officer determines the sustained rate of fire.
  14. The target area is the naval or belt line and legs. Avoid the head, face, neck, throat, chest, spine, lower back (kidneys) and groin.
- b. Bean Bag Shotgun<sup>6</sup> **(PSP V UOF c, d, e)**
1. Deployment range 0 - 30 feet (5 feet minimum recommendation for tactical and retention purposes)
  2. May be reloaded quickly
  3. The primary target area is the naval or belt line. Avoid the face/head, neck/throat, chest/sternum, spine, lower back/kidneys, and groin.
- c. Taser<sup>7</sup> **(PSP V UOF c, d, e)**
1. Probe mode deployment range 0 - 22 feet
    - a. Optimal ranges
      - i. Close Quarters cartridge: 4-12 feet
      - ii. Stand Off cartridge: 12-22 feet
  2. Drive-stun mode
    - a. Localized pain vs. neuro-muscular incapacitation
    - b. Deploy minimum of two inches from suspect
    - c. Apply drive-stun away from the impact site
  3. Deployed on one suspect at a time
  4. Should not be deployed near flammable materials.
  5. The optimum target areas are the back and naval area for the probes. Forearm, outside of thigh, calf muscle for drive stun/direct stun. Avoid using the stun feature on the neck, face, head, and groin.
- d. OC (Oleoresin Capsicum) **(PSP V UOF c, d, e)**
1. Deployment range 3 - 12 feet

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<sup>6</sup> LAPD Use of Force-Tactics Directive 6, Beanbag Shotgun

<sup>7</sup> LAPD Use of Force-Tactics Directive 4, Electronic Control Device TASER 7

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2. Must be sprayed directly into the suspect's face.
  3. May not affect violent, under the influence or mentally ill suspects.
10. Kicks, strikes, baton **(PSP V UOF c, d, e)**
- a. Requires proximity to the suspect.
  - b. May not affect violent, under the influence or mentally ill suspects
  - c. Size of suspect vs. size of officer
  - d. Abilities of officer vs. abilities of suspect
  - e. Proper approach, stance
    1. Gun leg back
    2. Balanced stance
  - f. Wait for additional officers if possible
- C. Background Awareness **(PSP V UOF c, d)**
1. Firearm selection
    - a. Choose best firearm for the situation
    - b. Consider capabilities and limitations of weapons
  2. "Be Sure of Your Target" and beyond
  3. Background considerations for **lethal and less-lethal** weapon systems
    - a. Location of involved and uninvolved parties
    - b. What is behind the suspect/subject
    - c. Ballistic capabilities of the firearm system selected

**V. PRACTICAL APPLICATION SCENARIOS (360 minutes)**  
**(PSP IV Strat Com a, b, c, e, h, i) (PSP V UOF c, d, e, f, g, h)**

**Purpose:** Students will demonstrate an understanding of the department's UOF and less-lethal policies, de-escalation techniques, command and control, and strategic communication techniques in three small groups.

**Procedure for Practical Application Scenarios:** Instructors will test student's ability to properly respond to and assess Practical Application Scenarios utilizing the above concepts learned during the classroom learning activities section. Students will participate in "cold" scenarios immediately following check-in and safety brief to gauge their current understanding of department policies and basic tactical concepts, Instructors will debrief the scenarios by critiquing the student's actions using the department policies and basic concepts. Students will review video of recorded practical application scenarios taken during the training and critique previously recorded scenarios based on the practical application of lessons learned from training

**Note:** The instructors should modify the Practical Application Scenarios as necessary based on the availability of resources, location of the training, number

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of instructors, number of students, and any other variables, to cover the course content in the safest and most efficient way possible

**VI. CLOSING**

**(30 mins)**

A. Debrief

1. What did you learn today that will help you practice and promote the mission, vision, and values of the Los Angeles Police Department?
2. What new knowledge and skills do you have that will help you preserve life?
3. What did you learn that will help you implement Tactical De-escalation Techniques into your work as a police officer?
4. What are your questions or concerns about today's training?

B. Evaluations

C. POST Roster

D. END TRAINING