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## Less-Lethal Use of Force Options

By Justin Oldham  
President/ CEO

If you've been in police or security work for the past decade, chances are when you started your less than lethal weapons options were limited. If you were in an escalating situation where verbal commands weren't working, your next best course of action was probably empty hands, or maybe using a slapjack or PR-24 baton.

But as times changed and police brutality cases became more frequent, a new generation of law enforcement and security officer joined the ranks — one that adopted a force continuum with less lethal weapons such as expandable batons and chemical/ OC sprays.

It wasn't long before even more creativity and advancement came along with bean bag and rubber ball rounds for the 12 gauge, and innovative less lethal ways of stopping vehicular pursuits included the spike strips and the PIT maneuver.

Accountability, abuse of power, and even liberal views from the courts have brought about an age where police and security officers are almost expected to be assaulted before they can act as necessary, and even afterwards, they are subject to internal and criminal investigations and sometimes their civil rights are overlooked.

Now, less lethal weaponry has evolved into incapacitating force with such options as the TASER Electronic Control Device, electric transport belts, and Pepperball launchers, all the while being recorded by digital recording devices attached to the weapons, our person, our vehicles, and uniforms.

There are a number of less lethal options and each has its place — it's the perpetrator's actions, their resistance, and the threat they present which determines which tool you pull from the 'batman' belt.

In the generations to come, there will no doubt be more new tools and weapons to hit the marketplace. Some may be good, others not so good. But the one thing we must always remember is the old saying, "Don't bring a knife to a gunfight."

Deciding on the necessary force, and which weapon to use to deliver that force, is often a split-second decision for an officer. Whatever force you choose will eventually be scrutinized by your department, the courts, and the media. Having the most up-to-date training and instruction on less lethal options will better prepare you for any future confrontations. You must always be aware of our surroundings — including sizing up the suspects confronting you — and must never rule out (or be afraid to use) deadly force if that means protecting our lives or the lives of others.

Discussing use-of-force situations that officers have encountered in their careers is a good way to calculate if the situation would be handled differently (with different levels of force, or with newer less lethal options) today than when it occurred in the past. Younger officers should actively seek out those discussions with the cops who have a few years under their belts. On the other side of that coin, the veterans can really learn some innovative new things being taught in academy training that didn't exist "back in the day."



The officer continuously assesses the situation and acts in a reasonable manner to ensure officer and public safety.

***Keep Your Less-Lethal Options Open – Have the proper training; Use the right weapon for the level of resistance; and most importantly, Know your department's policy, local and state law, and Use of Force Continuum.***



## Stay In Compliance

By Melissa Snow  
Exercise Evaluation Advisor

**Regulatory Compliance** is the term generally used to describe the policies and processes which organizations have in place to ensure that they follow the many laws, rules and regulations put in place by the agencies which control activity in a given jurisdiction.

Regulatory compliance also describes the goal that corporations or public agencies aspire to in their efforts to ensure that personnel are aware of and take steps to comply with relevant laws and regulations. This will include retaining data or records which can be used for the purpose of implementing or validating compliance.

### Have a policy to stay in compliance and a plan to pass audits, such as:

- DEQ, DOL, DOT, USDA, HMR, OSHA; and ISO 14001, 18001, and 27002.
- 29 CFR 1915, 1917, 1918 and 1910.119, 120, 132, 133, 135, 136, and 138.
- Local, State, and Federal Environmental, Health and Safety requirements.
- CLEET or other Security Board requirements for security officers and agencies.
- Federal, State, Local, and Corporate documentation records requirements.
- Continuing education for employee's current license and certification status.
- Human Resources and personnel documentation records for employees.

## TRAINING NEWS

Prusik Training Center will be publishing the 2011 training year Course Catalog in August, 2010. Some of the courses have been updated to keep the curriculum current and up-to-date, and many more courses have been added; to include personal defense, industrial safety and OSHA compliance courses.

For more information on Training courses and solutions, call 1-877-PRUSIKUSA, or E-mail: [traininginfo@prusikusa.com](mailto:traininginfo@prusikusa.com).

## Don't Stress the Heat

By John Robishaw  
Health and Safety Coordinator

The summer months mark a time of increased activity volume in most workplaces and households, as people indulge in recreation and exertion not normally pursued during the rest of the year. The warmer weather increases our exposure to heat-related injuries not only in our employees, but also in ourselves as workloads increase under higher temperatures and humidity. The adage, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," especially applies in the summer. Here are some everyday tips for maintaining optimal health during hot weather and reducing your chances of becoming a heat casualty.

**Drink water.** Water is the best single preventative measure to heat injuries we can use in the course of our work shifts, or personal activities. Don't wait until you are thirsty to drink water. Also, avoid caffeinated beverages as the caffeine has a diuretic effect and will add to your chances of suffering a heat injury. Use sports drinks sparingly.

**Take a break.** It's hard to schedule down time, but if you can catch a short rest and take advantage of the time to cool down; a mental and physical break.

**Eat well.** Meals are important in reducing heat stress. Try to avoid high-fat and carbohydrate-laden foods so they digest more easily. The water in fruits and vegetables also help improve your fluid intake. Eat small meals to reduce digestion time and energy.

**Exercise regularly.** Physical conditioning is one of the best ways to reduce your chances of suffering a heat injury. Physical activity also improves mental conditioning.

**Dress for conditions.** Depending on your work regulations, you may find some advantage in wearing synthetic undergarments beneath your work uniform to help reduce heat and wick away moisture. If you can't wear synthetic, look for lightweight wool or silk undergarments that promote wicking and breathability.

Summer weather creates some unique challenges to us at work and at home. Take the time to practice a little preventative measures for yourself, and watch for others, to reduce the chances of needing treatment for a personal heat injury.

