

Tactical Encounters Training Improves Officers' Critical Thinking

by Cara Kowal, Manager of
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NATIONWIDE, FROM MAINE to California, the highest area of liability for municipal pools is law enforcement. The very nature of a law enforcement career puts officers in situations that most people will likely never encounter.

Today, nearly everyone, everywhere, has a cell phone camera to record the actions of law enforcement officers, who are sometimes vilified when cameras don't tell the entire story, mistakes are made, or encounters go awry. The expectations and pressure for perfection are formidable.

For nearly 15 years, MMRMA has worked with Michigan-based Tactical Encounters, Inc., to offer reality-based Tactical Encounters for Patrol Officers training to member law enforcement agencies.

Two recent training sessions at the Northern Michigan Law Enforcement Training Group, using the facilities of Camp Grayling, were the 55th and 56th such Tactical Encounters sessions that MMRMA has funded through its Risk Avoidance Program (RAP).

Realistic Scenarios

Each Tactical Encounters session encompasses three full days, with limited classroom time and more focus on reality-based scenarios.



**The key message:
Learn, work the
tactics, be strong.**

A high student-to-instructor ratio improves the quality of teaching and learning for all participants.

Because all encounters don't happen during the day, training is also conducted as late as midnight to simulate situations during nighttime hours and low light.

Law enforcement officers are expected to have a certain degree of spontaneous critical analysis skills to assess situations, diagnose problems, and take appropriate action. Stressful situations, with outside stimuli constantly changing, may impair an officer's critical thinking and result in less than ideal judgments and actions.

Added to the stressful nature of a law enforcement career, negative media attention and fear of litigation may affect officers' decision-making and make even experienced officers hesitate or second-guess their decisions.

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**Practice makes progress,
exactly what reality-based
training programs are
designed to do.**

Upcoming Reality-Based Training Courses

See mmrma.org for registration information.

Rescue Task Force (RTF) Training

July 23–24, Livonia Police Department Firearms Range

This two-day course teaches Fire/EMS personnel how to better coordinate their efforts with law enforcement officers who are first responders to these incidents.

In the first component, Tactical Casualty Care (TCC), Fire/EMS personnel will:

- > Conduct rapid patient assessment and perform emergency medical interventions.
- > Demonstrate proficiency in applying tourniquets, hemostatic agents, and pressure bandages.
- > Apply occlusive dressings to penetrating chest wounds and properly control a patient's airway.

The second component covers how Fire/EMS personnel will be deployed and work together with law enforcement officers as an integral component of a rescue team.

Rapid Deployment to Active Shooter

December 4–5, MMRMA Training Center

This two-day course gives law enforcement officers basic knowledge to deal with a rapid deployment situation (such as an active shooter). The tactics taught are more advanced than the traditional diamond or quad formations.

Training presents a practical, systematic approach that affords maximum security while moving through a hostile environment. Students will learn a history of active shooter incidents, incident commonalities, terminology and definitions, and tactical techniques. Officers will also learn practical extraction techniques for injured persons.



June ushers in the 2018 season at Michigan International Speedway, the state's home of stock-car racing since 1968. The speedway is considered the fastest track in the NASCAR circuit, thanks to its wide, sweeping corners and long straightaways. Once literally factory models, today's stock cars are highly modified to race at speeds above 200 mph. The Daytona 500 is the sport's signature event.

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The *Risk Journal* is published six times a year for members of Michigan Municipal Risk Management Authority. We welcome your feedback. To comment or suggest story ideas, please contact Tamara Christie, communications specialist, at 734 513-0300, 800 243-1324, or tchristie@mmrma.org.

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Practice Makes Progress

In practice scenarios such as routine traffic stops, building searches, and de-escalating potential conflict, law enforcement officers can make mistakes and learn from them.

At a time when perfection is often expected but not attainable, the adage "practice makes perfect" is a misnomer. It's more apt to say "practice makes progress," which is exactly what reality-based training programs are designed to do.

Training with a high-stress component helps officers get accustomed to making the best possible decisions during real-life encounters. Just as weight training strengthens our muscles, training on how to better make split-second decisions strengthens the mind.

Many citizens don't realize the degree of expertise the law enforcement profession requires. Officers must know and act upon myriad policies, procedures, rules, regulations,



Camp Grayling is the ideal setting for reality-based scenarios that test police officers' critical thinking skills under stress.

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and laws to safely and effectively perform their duties.

Learn More to Be Strong

Tactical Encounters, Inc., employs trainers with more than 150 years of collective law enforcement experience, which lends credibility to its expert evaluations.

Teams are given feedback after each scenario, and instructors provide practical

recommendations and solutions to various problems encountered. The key message: learn, work the tactics, and be strong.

Other Reality-based Training

See the sidebar on page 3 for more information on upcoming reality-based courses: Rescue Task Force (RTF), and Rapid Response to Active Shooter.

Such training is another important way MMRMA helps member law enforcement and fire personnel gain practical knowledge to better serve their communities.

Annual Meeting Preview, continued from page 1

Managing Crisis

Media expert and consultant Anthony Huey returns to MMRMA as the featured speaker at Saturday morning's Annual Business Meeting, where he will share his expertise on crisis management in the age of social media.



Anthony Huey

Huey knows that perception is reality when it comes to organizational reputations. With that in mind, he will explore how members can use

social media to their advantage in crisis situations while avoiding its potential pitfalls.

Register Today

Registration for the Annual Meeting is now open on MMRMA's website. If you have questions about the event, the registration process, or your eligibility to attend, contact Tamara Christie, MMRMA Communications Specialist, at tchristie@mmrma.org, or Denise McGinn, MMRMA Events Planner, at denise@associationguidance.com or 517-333-3628.