

FIREARMS INSTRUCTOR'S MANUAL

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

R. E. Parham III is employed by the Chesterfield County, Virginia Police Department and is assigned to the Uniform Operations Bureau. He is certified by the Commonwealth of Virginia as a Firearms Instructor and Defensive Tactics Instructor. Additionally, the author is also certified by Armament Systems and Procedures as an ASP Tactical Police Baton Instructor. Over the past 10 years, he has provided instruction for officers from over 30 different local, state, and federal agencies. Mr. Parham is also a freelance writer and has had several articles published on various topics relating to training and officer safety. He is a member of the American Society of Law Enforcement Trainers, the International Association of Law Enforcement Firearms Instructors, the Police Marksman Association, the Virginia Association of Defensive Tactics Instructors, and the Virginia Tactical Police Association.

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*For Tyler,
Now we can play.*

Dad

PREFACE

This manual has been written with the Law Enforcement Firearms Instructor in mind. It is an attempt to save the instructor time by furnishing already prepared outlines that cover most of the subject currently taught by and to law enforcement personnel. The purpose of the manual is twofold: First, it can be used by current firearms instructors as a handy reference guide and also as a way of keeping all of the firearms outlines in one simple format. By preparing the manual in this fashion, all of an instructor's outlines are easily accessible should an instructor's class be challenged by the legal system. Secondly, this manual can be used as the text for firearms instructor initial certification classes. Once the new instructor completes the basic certification course, he or she will have a complete set of outlines that can be used for teaching their classes.

The first four outlines in this manual (The Role of the Firearms Instructor, Safety Responsibilities, Record Keeping, and Discipline) are generally used during instructor development classes. The rest of the outlines, while also used in instructor development classes, are also appropriate for basic recruit classes as well as classes that are designed for in-service personnel.

The Appendix contains material that can be used as class handouts or made into overheads for class presentations. It also contains a variety of courses of fire. Some of the courses can be used for general firearms qualification, while others are used for training a specific skill, such as linear and lateral movement or multiple attackers.

Hopefully, all Law Enforcement Firearms Instructors will find this manual useful, whether you only teach "once in a blue moon" or every day. It has been written to take the pain out of the "office work" part of being a firearms instructor and to give the instructor more time to teach.

INTRODUCTION

In June of 1997, I was asked to teach a Firearms Instructor School at the Chesterfield County, Virginia Police Academy. This was the first Firearms Instructor School where I was the lead instructor. Previously, I had taught several blocks of instruction for other Firearms Instructor Schools and had also taught recertification schools. When I searched for a manual to use during the school, I found everything from a simple schedule of courses to a manual consisting of only several pages. I felt that none of these were acceptable given the high liability that accompanies an individual who is certified as a Firearms Instructor. So, I set out to put together a manual that was acceptable for a basic 40-hour Firearms Instructor School. Little did I know what this would entail; hours of late night research, typing, and editing to name just a few. Finally, in the end, I feel that this is the best and most complete manual for the basic instructor on the market today. The manual is not intended to be a manual on all aspects of shooting. While there are chapters on special weapons, combat shooting, and chemical agents, these chapters are only an overview. As with any skill-oriented task, you cannot simply read a manual and expect to be proficient. In order to be proficient, you must get range time and practice. I cannot overstate this enough. In order to be a proficient firearms trainer, you must be a proficient shooter. Never stop learning and evaluating new techniques.

While this manual is designed to meet the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services mandates, it actually exceeds them. If you are not from Virginia or do not fall under their regulations, this manual is still useful. Basic firearms training is basic firearms training, no matter how you cut it. There should be something useful for every instructor no matter what their level of experience. This manual, as you will notice, is, for the most part, written in outline form. I felt that this was the best method. Since most instructors don't like spending time writing outlines, each chapter is actually an outline in and of itself. So, say you have to teach a class on range management, you now have an outline. And, after all, you would probably rather be shooting instead of writing anyway. I have included in the Appendix a number of courses of fire that I have gathered through the years as well as diagrams that can be converted to overheads and handouts.

Now, I need to thank a number of people, who without their support, this manual would not have been possible. First and foremost, I thank my lovely and understanding wife Lynda. She was definitely my driving force. Next, I need to thank my editor, Julie for reviewing not only this manual but also all of my manuscripts and giving me positive feedback. Larry, thanks for the artwork. Finally, I need to thank the other instructors who gave input into this manual. So, "Q", Steve, Mickey, Perry, and Ken thanks, guys.

I also need to thank the one person who got me started in all of this teachin' stuff in the first place. Oz, you showed me the ropes, took me under your wing, and taught me more than you will ever know and to that I say, thanks. If you had not seen whatever it was that you saw in me and encouraged me, I would not have become an instructor in the first place and this manual would be nonexistent.

I sincerely hope that you find this manual useful and remember what I said earlier; Never Stop Learning.

R.E.P.

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FIREARMS SAFETY AND RANGE RULES

1. *All firearms are considered to be loaded. This might be described as a state of mind. Many extremely proficient gun handlers have fired *unloaded* weapons. Never allow yourself to be comfortable with the theoretically unloaded gun.*
2. *No loaded firearms, loaded magazines, or live ammunition will be allowed in the classroom. To ensure that each firearm and magazine is unloaded, the student and an instructor will clear the weapon in an approved location and make visual verification. Additionally, no weapon will be taken out of the holster / case while in the classroom unless instructed to do so by an instructor.*
3. *Never permit your muzzle to cover anything which you are not willing to destroy.*
4. *Keep your finger outside the trigger guard and on the receiver until beginning your shot.*
5. *Be sure of your intended target and its background. Don't fire at anything that you have not positively identified as appropriate to hit.*
6. *Secure your weapons when not in use. Don't leave your weapon lying about, unattended. Either retain it on your person or lock it away.*
7. *Ear and eye protection will be worn at all times while conducting live fire exercises.*
8. *All injuries will be reported to an instructor immediately.*

HOT RANGE PROCEDURES

During this course, we will run what is commonly referred to as a *HOT RANGE*. After receiving an initial command to load your weapon, it is your responsibility to keep your weapon loaded throughout that particular course of fire. We will not give commands to reload. This accomplishes 2 things:

- It teaches the shooter to make their own decision to reload after firing, rather than being told to do so by someone else.
- It reinforces Rule #1 by making the rule factually correct.

Two additional rules are needed to function safely in a hot range:

- All handguns must remain holstered except while under the command of an instructor to draw.
- Shooters will not bend over on the line for any reason until the line has been declared safe by an instructor. This prevents bending over in front of someone else's muzzle.

FAILURE TO ADHERE TO THESE SAFETY RULES WILL BE CAUSE FOR IMMEDIATE DISMISSAL FROM THIS TRAINING COURSE.

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