

## C-4 THE “CASTLE COMBAT” COURSE

### WHY WE DEVELOPED THIS COURSE

Depending on the statistics you read, and the methods of collation of the information, the basic national average as reported for all Law Enforcement shootings appears to be dreadful, and woefully inadequate.

- ◆ 54% of all shootings were inside 6 feet
- ◆ 93% of all shootings inside 10 yards
- ◆ The hit rate anywhere on the body is 18% to 21%
- ◆ The lethal result rate is 5%

Something in our training methodology needs to be addressed. Our training standards for hits on *paper targets* run nationally from between 70% to 95% depending on the *Agency* or *Team* involved. This is not supported by actual *live fire* hits rates.

STTRR has set out to develop a basic frame work for a skill based firearms application course that requires a *Shooter* to perform on several levels, and at the same time. In essence to be able to *multi-task* when under combat oriented stress. This is a radical advancement over traditional range training.

2.

## THE COURSE OBJECTIVES

We at STTRR believe that the critical difference in a gunfight can be shown below. Failure to be able to apply the below subjects being one of the reasons Personnel *die* during mortal combat situations.



This series of shooting application tests have been designed to encompass the above skill set areas. The courses of fire are not as easy to physically complete as they are to read, even though the instructions are structured simply. This can be attributed to years of static range applications. With no layered requirements to move, communicate, and process stimuli.

Today many Instructors realize that *gun fights* are often undertaken on the move, and many are in low light conditions, with the participants under the effects of the **B.A.R.**

By changing the conditions *Students* will find it challenging, and must utilize several skill sets at the same time, in order to complete the drills. It is not uncommon for *frustration* to set in, and in some cases *anger* with the perceived failure of other participants to complete the drills correctly.

3.

## PERSONAL COMMENTS

“ When analyzing the events that proceed *Operator Deaths*, you must come to the inescapable conclusion that such deaths are the result of a sequence of mistakes.....Not just one mistake. These mistakes when analyzed, often follow a similar and recognizable pattern. This pattern more often than not consists of :

1. *Unrealistic and insufficient training.*
2. *Inaccurate and / or ignored intelligence.*
3. *A poor or complete absence of a sound tactical plan.*
4. *Team chaos created by unexpected suspect action, and the inability to effectively respond due to #'s 1 through 3.*
5. *Mr. Murphy presenting his ugly head at the worst possible moment.*
6. *Operator death.*

The **C.A.R.** system is the first training system I have experienced that has truly been designed around the idea that *Operators* must train for *Gun Fights*. Unlike conventional systems that have evolved into training *Operators* to address *paper targets*, from a *static line* position.

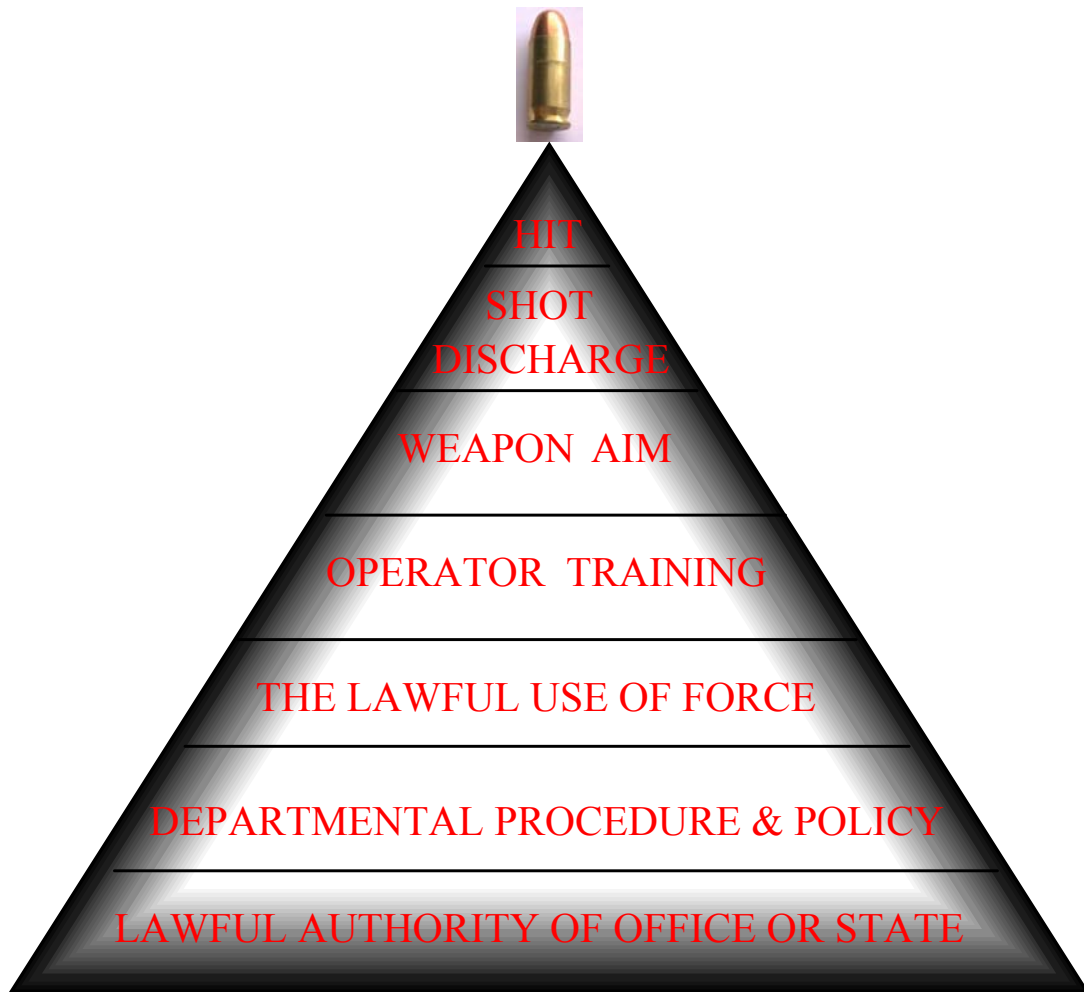
Paul Castle has recognized what all *true Operators* know in their heart's to be true. The systems we have been taught (*isosceles, weaver*) are fairly effective in a range environment, but, have been proven IN BLOOD to be wholly ineffective in *real* gunfights.

Paul Castle has done what the rest of the *Tactical Operator* Community around the world has failed to do. He has solved the problem. Paul has developed a system in **C.A.R.** that works in the *real world*, in *real gunfights*, in *deadly encounters*, that will save your life. Give *Yourself* and your *Team* the greatest gift you can give, a system and a plan to survive. Try this system. Give it a chance to reveal itself to you, you will never look back.”

*Garrett Faddis*  
*USN Seal Team 3. Point / Sniper*

4.

The drills contained within this program can be changed without risk of exhaustion. There are no limits to the *changes of conditions* that can be applied to the shooters. The limitations are only bound by the limitations of the thinking of the Instructor(s) and the physical location of the training. *Range safety* and *Public safety* will dictate the circumstances.



There are many training programs that are available to *Law Enforcement* and the *Military Operator*. Yet one of the most important elements required to be understood, and ultimately mastered, is rarely taught. That element has been described as the basic *Fundamentals of fluid combat*.

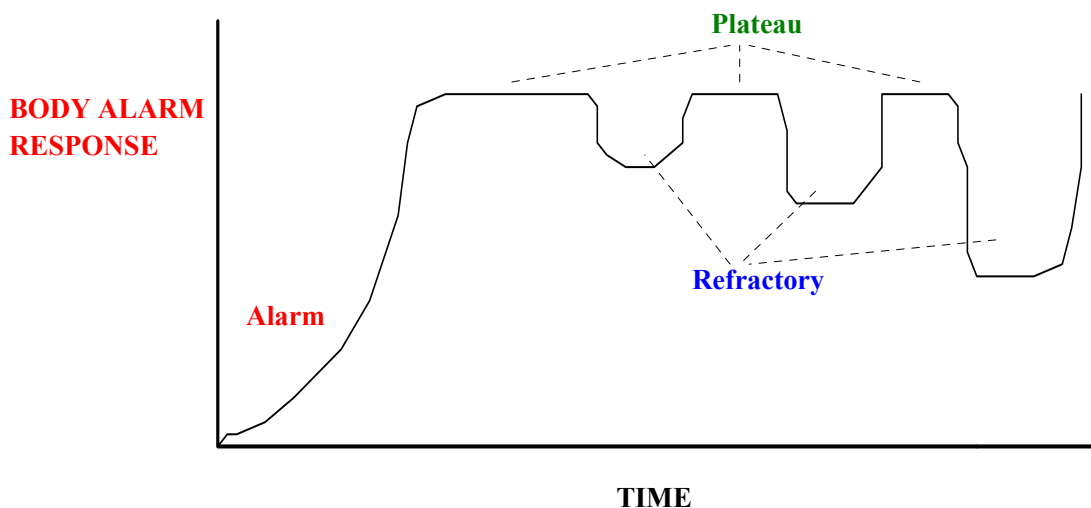
The above hierarchy demonstrates that there is a requirement to have *base foundations*, or *core skill sets* to *win a gunfight*. You will never need a gun, until you need it badly. It is crucial that the target is identified & engaged.

5.

## COMBAT STRESS & THE BODY ALARM RESPONSE

The Body Alarm Response (**B.A.R.**) is a verbal description of the natural unstoppable psychological and physiological changes that take place in every Human Being when they have been startled or otherwise thrust into a situation of urgency, perceived importance and or fear. For example “*When confronting an unexpected lethal force threat.*” It starts and continues, it has a life of its own. It is *adaptive* in that it can be helpful, and *mal-adaptive* in that it can also be unhelpful.

Medical and psychological specialists state that **B.A.R.** becomes noticed when we are first introduced to an event or set of circumstances which bring us to an increased level of arousal. This set of circumstance is perceived by us to be startling or otherwise sudden and of an urgent nature. See the graph below.



How does this **B.A.R.** take place? First our body picks up information from one or more of our senses which we process and filter. If this information is perceived as being an urgent and immediate threat, our body immediately goes into psychological and physiological changes. This point of startle and rapid change is termed the **Alarm** phase. During this phase we engage our *Symphatic Nervous System* activation which does a number of things to our body in order to prepare it for a “*fight for survival.*”

6. cont.

These changes include vasoconstriction, audio exclusion, tunnel vision, fine motor control loss and others. Psychologically our body is having an “*Oh Boy!*” moment, and because the response is so deeply ingrained into our DNA we simply cannot do anything else. Basically at the moment we are experiencing the **Alarm** phase of **B.A.R.** we experience a temporary mind freeze.

The **Alarm** phase lasts only a few moments, but when it is finished our body has gone through a transformation. Dozens of chemicals and physiological changes have been introduced into our system, and we are in the next phase of **B.A.R.** the **Plateau**. You will be able to perform better as you approach the **Plateau** phase.

The **Plateau** phase is often regarded by *Operators* as a detriment because most experience a decreased performance level to both cognitive and psychomotor skills. The detriment has been seen by many as a decreased ability to perform tasks and has a direct relation to the level and type of training the Operator has received. One of Sabre Tactical’s maxims reflects on this point by stating that *In a Crisis We Do Not Rise to the Occasion But Merely Default to Our Level of Training*. Meaning, if we get a **B.A.R.** activation but do not recognize the stimulus or situation and have no orientating response we will undoubtedly “*Freeze.*”

If we do recognize the situation and have trained to do something which specialists term having an “*Orientating Response*” we will enact a set of practiced movements known as a *Behavioral Chain*. An example of this is an *Operator* suddenly identifying a deadly force threat, firing their weapon until it stops, checking and seeing the slide locked back with no ammunition in the chamber and nothing in the magazine. Then undertaking a *combat reload* based on their previous training, i.e. Behavioral Chain, also described as “*Unconscious Competence.*”

But if we had no training or understanding of that “*lock back*” situation we would most likely freeze and hesitate much longer before performing a reload if at all. This has been described as “*Unconscious Incompetence*” to perform a set task. Students are constantly observed in this phase on the training range.

7.

An important and main issue an *Operator* must know about the **Plateau** is that it is the phase they need to maintain and properly function in. The **Plateau** equates to a productive response. Since there is nothing anyone can do to impede or stop the **B.A.R.** we must understand how to prolong it, and properly function during this time period. First, because of the physiological changes to the body they must understand that loss of bladder and sphincter control can be natural.

It is simply the body's reaction to shutting off these unessential processes, and shunting the blood and energy to the heart and large muscles in an effort to mobilize for a *flight or flight* reaction. This is also the case for vasoconstriction where our blood vessels contract and restrict the flow of blood into our extremities. This is so we can withstand large wounds to our *arms* and *legs* with a decreased level of immediate blood loss.

Secondly, we know we may have target fixation, tunnel vision, audio exclusion, increased heart rate, fine motor control loss and dual sight picture among other responses. We can train in ways to overcome many of the effects of these natural responses.

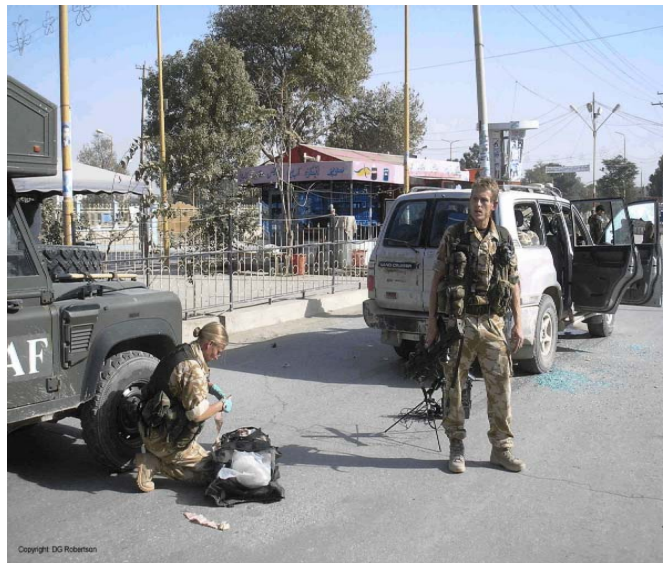
The **C.A.R.** System aids *Operators* in this phase by eliminating dual sight picture, and placing the weapon front sight in our natural focal point (*accommodation or reading distance*) to decrease the time it takes to properly sight. This is a fundamental shift from traditional shooting styles, and is one of the major reasons why the **C.A.R.** system is so effective in combat.

The **C.A.R.** system utilizes body and sense of direction alignment in conjunction with aimed sight in order to immediately acquire proper weapon alignment. Finally, the **C.A.R.** system will allow an *Operator* to fire their weapon while limiting almost 95% of the weapons recoil due to working in harmony with the center axis of the *Operators* body. In essence what many Instructors consider to be detrimental in a gunfight, i.e. weapon recoil, the **C.A.R.** system eliminates.

8.

Another area the **C.A.R.** system helps to aid *Operators* in the **Plateau** period is in its Returning phase. Here we will enact a “Z” Scan and pivot like a tank turret while forcing a few normal breaths. We are actively scanning for additional threats, observing our last known threat and most importantly fighting off the third phase of **B.A.R.** by trying to maintain the alertness of the **Plateau** period. It is important to delay the final phase of **B.A.R.** until we are absolutely sure the situation is over and safe.

The below pictures were taken by Mr G. Robinson, and have been reproduced for educational purposes only. As can be clearly seen on Cpl. S\*\*\*\*\* face he is angry. He has been hit in the shoulder by fragments of an AK47 round. Anger is a natural emotion when we are injured. This elevated emotional state often allows us to fight through pain. It could be said that at this point this *Operator* is still in the **Plateau** period and aware.



The last phase of the **B.A.R.** is termed the **Refractory** period. Here is where the *Operator* has in effect “*Stood Down*” from the incident, most likely believing it to be over. The body then goes through a strong Parasympathetic Nervous System backlash. Napoleon Bonapart recognized that the time when troops are at their most vulnerable is the time *directly after* a battle. As can clearly be seen from his face, he is going into the **Refractory** period. His face has gone pale, he appears to be staring into space, and his shoulders are rounded. Note that his grip on his weapon is now very loose, and the weight of the grenade launcher has angled the weapon backwards.

9.

This is due to a rapid decline in **B.A.R.** and a backlash of all the systems which initially shifted during the **Alarm** phase. Here an *Operator* must know that if they allow themselves to relax they will fall into a physically and psychologically weaker and more vulnerable state. This is of course inevitable and necessary, but only when the scene can be secured by fresh troops who did not go through the initial assault. Simply put, no other shooting technique aids the *Operator* throughout every element of the **Plateau** phase as much as the **C.A.R.** System.

The **C.A.R.** system renders irrelevant all of the fears **B.A.R.** normally provokes in an *Operator* and helps them to perform while maintaining a state of *Alertness* and *Planning*. In addition the **C.A.R.** system offers superior *Weapon Retention* techniques, so an *Operator* can keep their weapon if injured or suffering from the diminished physical and cognitive processes associated with the **Refractory** phase.

There is one other technique the **C.A.R.** system utilizes in its training which has a dramatic impact on exactly how detrimental the **Refractory** phase will be on an *Operator*. It is a breathing technique developed by Dr. Herbert Benson of Harvard University. The *Benson Technique* \*\* is a simple breathing exercise which will enable an *Operator* to lessen the impact of the *Refractory Phase* by helping them to “*Stand Down*” after an incident. In turn they will be much more ready to respond to further threats should their be a need. The technique it self is extremely easy and if done correctly will lead to a massive decline in stress, tension and anxiety.

First, try to find an environment where you can sit and relax at least slightly. Now take in a deep breath in through your mouth and hold it for a moment almost as if your were yawning. Exhale through your mouth as if you were blowing on a cup of hot coffee. Continue to repeat this cycle for a few minutes. Basically you are building up the level of CO<sub>2</sub> in your body and promoting your body to yawn. If you are driving or lying down it is quite possible to fall asleep so be aware. This process could take from 1 to 5 minutes.

10.

As the **B.A.R.** graph shows it is possible to go through the **Alarm, Plateau** and **Refractory** phase multiple times. Each time you get to the refractory phase you are slipping deeper away from the ability to react back to the **Plateau** phase effectively. But, if you practice the *Benson Breathing Technique* your ability to respond will not diminish as far.

The **C.A.R.** Firearms System renders irrelevant the problems associated with the **Plateau** phase, which no other shooting style can match. If utilized along with the *Benson Breathing Technique* will give *Operators* the ability to maintain their effectiveness for a greatly extended period.

That may make all the difference you will need. In a *Gunfight* there are no points for coming second.

\*\* Herbert Benson. Published in 1968.

This section was written as a result of information supplied to the Authors by Dr. Niel Aronov Ph.D. A clinical and Forensic Psychologist in Memphis TN.

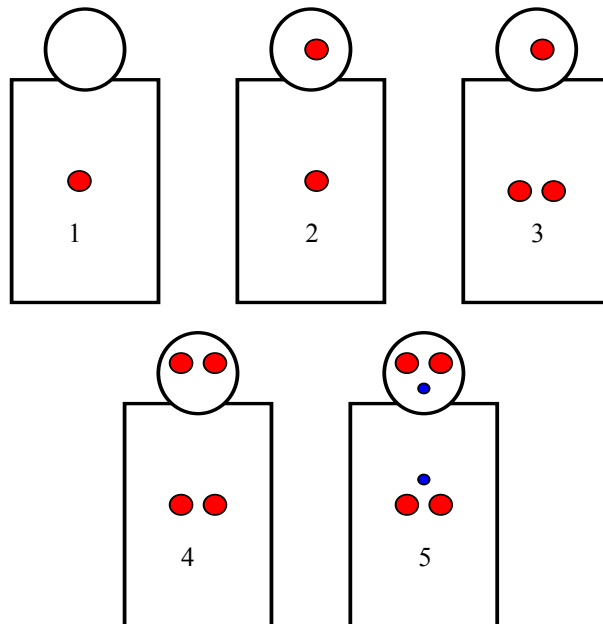


11.

## **'OUTLINE TASK' SHOOTING APPLICATIONS**

The application "*Performance*" or "*Task*" is the standard by which all other changes of conditions may be applied. The basic frame work will not change. There will be **five** separate, but equally important strings of fire. Shot in chronological order, starting from left to right.

1. ONE BODY SHOT TO CENTER MASS
2. ONE BODY SHOT TO CENTER MASS ONE HEAD SHOT
3. TWO BODY SHOTS TO CENTER MASS ONE TO THE HEAD
4. TWO BODY SHOTS TO CENTER MASS TWO TO THE HEAD
5. TWO BODY SHOTS TO CENTER MASS TWO TO THE HEAD THEN A SHOT TO BODY OR HEAD AS A DECISION SHOT



1. BODY
2. BODY HEAD
3. BODY BODY HEAD
4. BODY BODY HEAD HEAD
5. BODY BODY HEAD HEAD THEN CHOOSE **B/H**

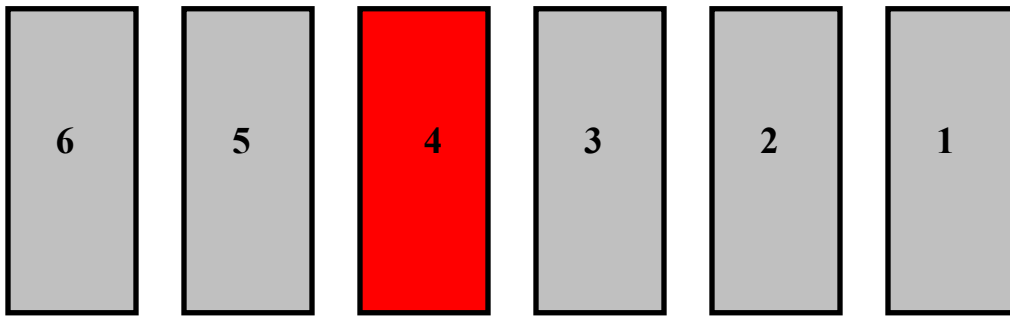
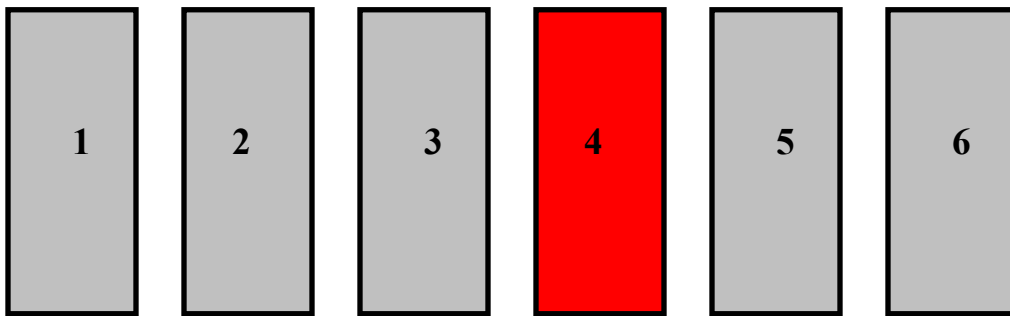
12.

## **TARGET POSITIONING APPLICATIONS**

The targets will be lined up at the two to three yard line ( pistols )

The targets will be lined up at the five or ten yard line ( Carbines )

**When shooting from left to right target 4 is a no-shoot target**



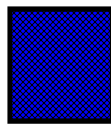
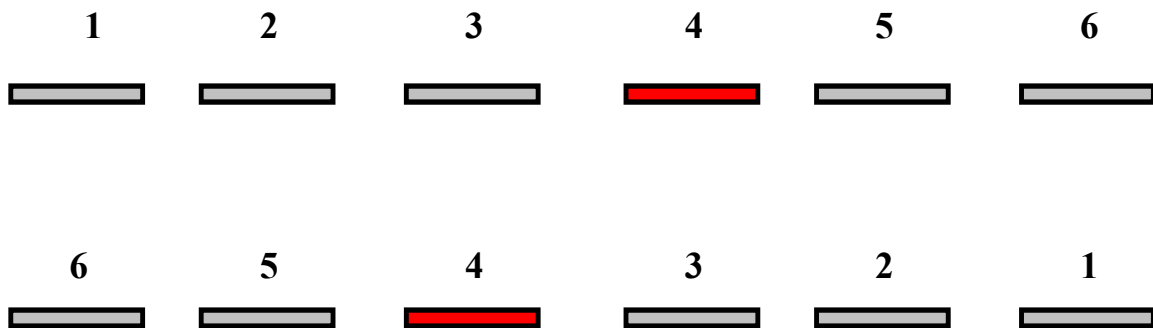
**When shooting from right to left target 4 is the no shoot target**



13.

## **TARGET POSITIONING - OVERHEAD VIEW**

**When shooting from left to right target 4 is a no-shoot target  
When shooting from right to left target 4 is the no shoot target**



**Barricade**



## THE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

- This will be shot starting from **left to right, in chronological order**, one shooter at a time with the last shooter positioned at the end of the line calling “*Clear*” in order to end the string, and commence the next. **This is a total of 75 rounds fired by five shooters on the line, one at a time.**
- After ‘*Clear*’ has been given, and between each string, the Team of 5 shooters, must as a group move around the barricade, and return to a different target. **They cannot shoot on the same target twice.**
  - ☞ 1st string : fired **left to right** with the weapon held in the **weapon** hand.
  - ☞ 2nd string : fired **right to left** with the weapon held in the **reaction** hand.
  - ☞ 3rd string : fired **left to right** with the weapon held in the **weapon** hand.
  - ☞ 4th string : fired **right to left** with the weapon held in the **reaction** hand.
  - ☞ 5th string : fired **left to right** with the weapon held in the **weapon** hand.

Weapon hand = *Strong hand*

Reaction hand = *off hand*

Long weapons = *left or right shoulder positions*

- All **body** shots must be taken from a **kneeling position**, and all **head** shots must be taken from a **standing position** by each shooter.
- This course of fire requires a standard of 100% hits on the appropriate target, in the correct order of engagement, from the correct shooting position, and all within the time constraints. ( **1 min. 30 seconds** )
- The **no shoot** target(s) **must not** be engaged when shooting in either direction i.e. target 4 when shooting left to right.
- The very last round fired on the 5th string ( *weapon hand* ) must be taken with **one hand** only. ( *unsupported* )
- There is **no allowance** for malfunctions. Back-up weapons are acceptable if authorized.

15.

## THE TEAM CHALLENGE

We have found that only the most *switched on* and *skilled* Teams are able to meet the standards of this shooting course. We include changes in conditions to meet individual requirements i.e. transition from *long weapons* to *short weapons* as an addition to the shooting course i.e. shot twice once with Carbine then individual transition to small arms.

We often add explosive breaching, and use of diversion distraction devices between each of the five separate strings, and add the use of tactical shields, with each shooter having a *Shield Operator* with them as they progress through each of the five individual stages.



*Good luck on the range.*

*Paul Castle.*