

**SBCSD**

# **Ballistic Shield Operators Course**

**Course # 2330-10207**

**Expanded Outline 4 Hr.**



SBCSD Training Center, Range Staff  
04/23/2018/tr

## **COURSE GOAL:**

To provide students with the theory and practical training, skills, and techniques in the use and limitations of the ballistic shield.

## **LEARNING OBJECTIVES:**

- Discuss advantages and disadvantages of the ballistic shield for law enforcement operations.
- Demonstrate carrying positions and movement while using the ballistic shield.
- Demonstrate shooting techniques using the ballistic shield.
- Demonstrate close quarter and retention techniques using the ballistic shield.
- Demonstrate the ability to incorporate the ballistic shield into existing police tactical operations.
- Ballistic Shield components and nomenclature
- Live fire practice with the Ballistic Shield
- Ballistic Shield use during common law enforcement operations.

## **I. Introduction / Course Overview**

### A. Introduction

1. Instructor(s)
  - a. Name, Assignment
  - b. Experience
  - c. All Students must be full duty (no work restrictions).
2. Handouts: The Ballistic Shield handout will be given to all students
3. A copy of the Safety Guidelines will be available for the students

### B. Course Overview

1. *Ballistic Shield components and nomenclature*
2. Ballistic Shield advantages and disadvantages
3. Ballistic Shield carrying positions.
4. Live fire practice with the Ballistic Shield.
5. Ballistic Shield use during a Warrant Service
6. Ballistic Shield use during Breaching operations
7. Ballistic Shield use during MACTAC/Active Shooter operations.
8. Building Search Techniques-Practical Application
9. Ballistic Shield use during Officer Down Rescue
10. Ballistic Shield use during common law enforcement operations

## C. Overview Safety Plan

### 1. Discuss Safety Rules:

- a. The following protective equipment is mandatory during the live fire application:
  - 1) Protective eyewear
  - 2) Ear protection-shall be American National Standards Institute (ANSI) approved
  - 3) Department approved soft body armor or ballistic tactical vest
  - 4) No sandals or open toed footwear allowed
  - 5) No shorts
  - 6) Knee pads, elbow pads, gloves are optional
- b. Four Firearms Safety Rules:
  1. All guns are always loaded;
  2. Never allow the muzzle to cover anything you are not willing to shoot;
  3. Keep your finger off the trigger until your sights are aligned on the target and you intend to shoot; and,
  4. Be sure of your target.

## II. Introduction to the Ballistic Shield

### A. Ballistic Shield

#### 1. Shield nomenclature

- a. *Face and Back*-normally made of an ABS plastic or rubberized spray covering the ballistic material
- b. *Ballistic Protection*- Made of highly compressed polyethylene.
- c. *Viewport*-made of polycarbonate resin with the same protection level as the shield body. Easily scratched and must be protected to maintain visual clarity.
- d. *Edging*- Made of a fiberglass composite. The edging protects the ballistic body of the shield.
- e. *Light*- Integrated into the shield. Provides operator powerful illumination to identify possible threats and disorient suspects.
- f. *Forearm strap*-Used to facilitate transitional movement, ease of carry and control. Also, facilitates use of both hands for variety of actions, including pistol reloading/malfunction clearing.
- g. *Foam pad*- Used to cushion forearm while holding the shield in position.

#### 2. Care and cleaning

- a. *Viewport*-The viewport, like the visors on the ballistic helmet, are easily scratched and damaged. Be careful to avoid unnecessary scratches or other damage to the viewport, as it could affect visibility. When placing the shield on the ground keep the viewport face up to avoid scratching it on the ground.
- b. *Cleaning*-Keep the ballistic shield clean, by using a soft cloth dampened with water to remove dirt or grime from the handle and light systems. Keep the light switches free from excessive dirt and dust.
- c. *Storage*- Always store the shield in its protective carrying bag when not deployed.

### 3. Ballistic Shield Advantages and Disadvantages

#### a. Advantages

- 1) *Ballistic Protection*: Ballistic shields are rated to stop NIJ Level III (High Powered Rifle) threats. They are literally “portable cover”. The ballistic shields are designed to be used in conjunction with Department firearms, to include handgun, shotgun and patrol rifle. They can also protect officers against blunt and edged weapon assaults.
- 2) *Light weight*: The ballistic shield weighs approximately 18 pounds including lighting system, carrying straps and viewport.
- 3) *High intensity lighting system*: The ballistic shield is equipped with a high intensity (900 lumens) light system designed to illuminate and disorient potentially armed suspects. This lighting system acts independently of weapon mounted lighting systems.
- 4) *High Mobility/Low profile*: The ballistic shields are intentionally designed for ease of mobility in close quarter situations, compared to those commonly used in the past.

#### b. Disadvantages

- 1) *Focal point isolation (Tunnel Vision)*. The use of a ballistic shield with a viewport provides excellent protection. However, care must be given to maintain situational awareness while using the shield, as the use of a viewport can decrease the operator’s field of view, ability to communicate and hear.
- 2) *Shield weight and size*: No matter how compact and light a shield is, it’s still heavier and bigger than no shield. You must balance the protection

afforded by the shield with the innate cumbersomeness of carrying a large object during tactical situations.

- 3) *Ballistic protection:* Ballistic Shields, like body armor, are designed to protect the user against a certain type of ammunition fired at a certain velocity. Level III ballistic shields and body armor will not protect against armor piercing rifle rounds.

Like any tactical option, it is ultimately the operator's decision to weigh the "pros and cons" to determine what is best and most effective in each situation.

Sometimes the best choice is not the easiest choice.

4. *Size and Weight* are dictated by the materials (the viewport is typically the heaviest part of the shield) and overall size of the shield.
5. *Maneuverability* is more a function of the size and design characteristics
6. *Ballistic Capabilities*  
Most handheld ballistic shields are rated Level IIIA, which means they are designed to stop only handgun rounds. The NIJ Level III rated shields ballistic shields can stop high powered rifle rounds. These are tested by an independent lab to ensure they stop the rounds at specific velocities. They are not designed to stop armor piercing rifle rounds. Shields that are designed to stop armor piercing rounds are rated at Level IV. Just like any other cover, it is imperative to know what the protective level of the shield you are using.
7. *Personal protective equipment*-The ballistic shield augments and does not replace your personal protective equipment (PPE) such as your ballistic helmet, body armor, gloves and eye protection. A shield operator should wear a helmet, body armor and eye protection when deploying the ballistic shield. Protective tactical gloves are also an option particularly when conducting breaching operations.
8. Only trained officers and supervisors can deploy and use the ballistic shield. Trained means taking and passing an approved Department shield course put on by certified Department ballistic shield instructors.

9. Supervisors shall ensure that only trained officers deploy the ballistic shield and use it properly.

### **III. Shield Manipulations Demonstration / Practice (Dry)**

#### **A. Demonstration of ballistic shield positions**

1. Discuss and demonstrate one handed shooting techniques with primary hand. Discuss the differences between one and two-handed shooting techniques. Demonstrate how one-handed shooting position with support side arm held close to torso is like shield positions.
2. Discuss and demonstrate shield carrying and shooting positions
  - a. Rest position
    1. Hold the shield in upside down position, support hand through the sling and holding the handle.  
This is considered an administrative rest position, designed to facilitate rest and ease of movement without fatiguing the operator.
  - b. Shoulder Shield
    1. The support hand holding the shield is placed on the support side shoulder so that the shield is facing away from the operator and the handle is near the support side shoulder. For some people the handle will rest on the shoulder. This is considered a tactical rest position, designed to facilitate rest and ease of movement without fatiguing the operator. It also is used to allow the operator better frontal visibility while moving with the shield.
  - c. Sling Shield
    1. Support arm through the forearm strap, support hand releases the handle so the strap supports the weight of the shield. This will be used for weapon reloading and malfunction applications.
  - d. Combat Ready Wrap
    1. Operator has shield in support hand
    2. Shield is held in front of operator's face
    3. Inner part of the primary elbow is placed around shield cutout
    4. Weapon is displayed in front of viewport

5. Primary arm elbow crease presses against shield to provide stability
  6. Weapon should be canted slightly towards primary side (not horizontal)
  7. Low Ready can be used in this position by lowering the weapon below the view port
- e. Close Combat position (Primary side)
1. Operator has shield in support hand
  2. Shield is held in front of operator's face
  3. Weapon is presented and resting on strong side cutout with front or bottom of the trigger guard pressed against the cutout or side of the shield below the cutout.
  4. Never allow a pistol light to rest on the shield. If you have a pistol light use the bottom of the trigger guard as the point of contact on the shield.
  5. The weapon/ejection port is slightly canted away from shield to avoid malfunction. Primary side elbow is tucked behind shield.
- f. Close Combat position (Support Side)
1. Operator has shield in support hand
  2. Shield is held in front of operator's face
  3. Weapon is presented and resting on support side cutout with front or bottom of the trigger guard pressed against the cutout or side of the shield below the cutout.
  4. Never allow a pistol light to rest on the shield. If you have a pistol light use the bottom of the trigger guard as the point of contact on the shield.
  5. The weapon/ejection port is slightly canted away from shield to avoid malfunction. Primary side elbow is tucked behind shield.
- g. Kneeling position
1. From any standing shield position, step forward with the support side foot and drop the primary knee down into a speed kneeling position
  2. Invert the shield keeping it in front of you (not to the side)
  3. Release the handle to manipulate the weapon with two hands or to reload or clear malfunction while still in the strap.
  4. If you're going to be in position for an extended period, you can come out of the strap and turn the

shield facing up (12 o'clock position). You can also step on the strap with your forward foot to stabilize the shield, particularly if using a patrol rifle or shotgun in this position.

5. To get back up: From the inverted position, grab the handle. Start rotating the shield as you stand and use any firing position needed until you reach the standing position and assess. This is also known as "*fighting your way back up*".
- h. Prone position (Optional)
    1. From a standing position: Assume a speed kneeling position with the shield inverted, then go to #2.
    2. From kneeling position: Invert the shield. Release the handle and get out of the forearm strap system. Grab the handle and turn the shield into a horizontal position (as opposed to the normal vertical position) and use the now bottom cutout space to deploy the pistol and place yourself in a prone position.
    3. To stand up from prone: Grab the handle (palm up), as you get to a kneeling position, invert the shield. Get back into the forearm strap and reacquire the handle. "Fight your way back up" to a standing position.
  - i. Ground Shield (shield facing up to protect viewport)
  - j. Low Ready Shield with assessment
  - k. Split Shield position: used while making room entries. The Split Shield position is used to face a threat on the officer's support side while his attention and firearm are facing towards the primary side threat
3. Discuss and demonstrate reloading the pistol while carrying the shield.
    - a. Active: immediate action drill by slinging the shield and completing tactical and speed reloads while on the move
    - b. Static: taking cover behind the shield in the kneeling position and completing tactical and speed reloads while stationary.
  4. Discuss and demonstrate placement of weapon on shield with and without weapon attached light.

5. Discuss and demonstrate use of shield light.
- B. Students will practice above skills and demonstrate their ability to perform them satisfactorily.
  - C. Discuss the role of the shield operator's partners take in relaying commands and observations; covering the shield operator's flanks. The shield operator does not work in isolation. It is important that the shield operator and his partner work as a team to accomplish their goals.

## **IV. Live Fire**

### **A. Dry Fire Practice**

From 7-yard line, students should have the shield at a rest position and an unloaded firearm in their holster. The intent of this dry fire practice is to build confidence and allow the student to become comfortable with the shooting positions and the manipulations of their weapons that will be required to obtain proficiency. Perform the following drills until the students become comfortable with the shooting positions:

1. From the rest position with the weapon holstered, draw and come to combat ready wrap. Dry fire one round, let the shield hang on the support arm, and stage your pistol for dry fire practice. Holster and return to the rest position.
2. From the rest position with the weapon holstered, draw and come to combat ready wrap. Transition to the close contact position. Dry fire one round, let the shield hang on the support arm, and stage your pistol for dry fire practice. Holster and return to the rest position.
3. From the rest position with the weapon holstered, draw and come to combat ready wrap. Transition to support side close contact making sure that students do not cover their support arm with the muzzle of their weapon. Make sure that there is sufficient distance between the pistol and the student's face in this position to prevent contact during recoil. Dry fire one round, let the shield hang on the support arm, and stage your pistol for dry fire practice. Holster and return to the rest position.
4. From the rest position with the weapon holstered, draw and come to combat ready wrap. Transition to 6 o'clock kneeling. Dry fire three to five rounds. Stand and let the shield hang on the support arm. Stage your pistol for dry fire practice. Holster and return to the rest position. Make sure that students stand

before holstering to ensure that they do not cover their legs with their muzzle.

5. From the rest position with the weapon holstered, draw and come to combat ready wrap. Transition to 6 o'clock kneeling. Dry fire three to five rounds. Now transition to 12 o'clock kneeling and dry fire three to five rounds. Flip the shield back to 6 o'clock kneeling and place the support side arm back in the sling and grip the carry handle. Stand and let the shield hang on the support arm, and stage your pistol for dry fire practice. Holster and return to the rest position. Make sure that students stand before holstering to ensure that they do not cover their legs with their muzzle.
6. From the rest position with the weapon holstered, draw and come to combat ready wrap. Transition to 6 o'clock kneeling. Dry fire three to five rounds. Transition to prone while keeping the muzzle in a safe direction. Dry fire one round. While in the prone position, make sure that the weapon is far enough away from the viewport to prevent the slide from striking the glass during firing. Stand and let the shield hang on the support arm, and stage your pistol for dry fire practice. Holster and return to the rest position. Make sure that students stand before holstering to ensure that they do not cover their legs with their muzzle.

#### B. Clearing Weapon Malfunctions with The Ballistic Shield in Active and Static Situations.

When a student encounters a malfunction, they are to let the shield hang on their support side arm and use both hands to clear the weapon. Once the malfunction has been cleared, the student should immediately engage their target with a controlled pair while letting the shield hang on their support side arm. Only after engaging the target should the student reacquire a standard grip on the shield.

First, we will address the Type 1 malfunction, failure to fire.

From the 7-yard line, each student should load three magazines with six live rounds and one dummy round. This will induce a Type 1 malfunction while firing. Ideally, students will load magazines for each other to prevent advanced knowledge of when a malfunction will occur. Once all three magazines are prepared students will load and make ready for live fire with their first magazine with the shield on their support side arm. They are then to assume the rest position with a holstered pistol.

Upon the instructor's command, the student will draw, come to the combat ready wrap, and fire six rounds center of mass at their target. When the encounter a malfunction, the student should let the shield hand from the support side arm and clear the weapon and then immediately engage the target with the remainder of their rounds while letting the shield hang from their support side arm. Upon completion of this task the student should perform an out of battery speed reload, assess, holster, and reacquire the shield.

The remaining two types of malfunctions will be addressed with the assistance of the instructor or a partner to set up the malfunctions.

From 7-yard line, instructor sets up each malfunction and hands the weapon to the student who will assume a combat ready wrap at the low ready. On command the student will attempt to fire two rounds on target, clear the malfunction and fire two rounds center mass of the target while letting the shield hang from their support arm. The malfunctions to be addressed are as follows:

1. Failure to Eject/Stovepipe (Tap, Roll, Rack)
2. Failure to Extract/Double feed (Rip, Rack, Reload)

### C. Live Fire Practice

Live fire practice will occur from the 3-yard line for the primary side close contact position and from 7-yard line for all other shooting positions. Students should be instructed to load all available magazines to 8 rounds. Targets should be changed frequently to allow students to see where they are having issues.

For each of these shooting exercises, students should carry the shield the entire time while manipulating the weapon, loading magazines and shooting. Malfunctions should be cleared as encountered while letting the shield hang on the support arm. Perform the following drills until the students become comfortable with the shooting positions and display good accuracy:

1. Begin at the 3-yard line with the shield in a rest position and a holstered, empty weapon. Upon the instructor's command, load your weapon with an 8-round magazine and come to combat ready wrap. Fire one round, and assess your accuracy. Continue until you are at slide lock. Load your next 8 round magazine, holster and return to the rest position.
2. Move to the 7-yard line. From the rest position with the weapon holstered, draw and come to combat ready wrap. Fire two

- rounds, and assess. Repeat until you are out of battery and then reload. Holster and return to the rest position.
3. From the rest position with the weapon holstered, draw and come to combat ready wrap. Transition to support side close contact making sure that students do not cover their support arm with the muzzle of their weapon. Make sure that there is sufficient distance between the pistol and the student's face in this position to prevent contact during recoil. Fire two rounds, and assess. Repeat until you are out of battery and then reload. Holster and return to the rest position.
  4. From the rest position with the weapon holstered, draw and come to combat ready wrap. Transition to 6 o'clock kneeling. Fire two rounds, and assess. Repeat until you are out of battery and then reload. Holster and return to the rest position. Make sure that students stand before holstering to ensure that they do not cover their legs with their muzzle.
  5. From the rest position with the weapon holstered, draw and come to combat ready wrap. Transition to 6 o'clock kneeling. Now transition to 12 o'clock kneeling. Fire two rounds, and assess. Repeat until you are out of battery and then reload. Flip the shield back to 6 o'clock kneeling and place the support side arm back in the sling and grip the carry handle. Stand then holster and return to the rest position. Make sure that students stand before holstering to ensure that they do not cover their legs with their muzzle.
  6. From the rest position with the weapon holstered, draw and come to combat ready wrap. Transition to 6 o'clock kneeling. Fire two rounds, and assess. Repeat until you are out of battery and then reload. Transition to prone while keeping the muzzle in a safe direction. While in the prone position, make sure that the weapon is far enough away from the viewport to prevent the slide from striking the glass during firing. Fire two rounds, and assess. Repeat until you are out of battery and then reload. Stand then holster and return to the rest position. Make sure that students stand before holstering to ensure that they do not cover their legs with their muzzle.

## **V. Practical Application During Tactical Situations**

- A. *Discuss and demonstrate typical situations where the Ballistic Shield could be used*
  1. Building searches: Demonstrate the use of the shield while conducting door entries, room clearances and hallway movement. Discuss corner-fed and center fed rooms; hallway

movement; stairwell clearing and movement options; double point option.

2. Breaching operations: Demonstrate the use of the shield while conducting manual breaching operations on breaching door and breaching window.
3. High risk vehicle stops: Demonstrate the use of the shield while clearing the suspect vehicle and covering the suspect during handcuffing.
4. Approaching to handcuff: Demonstrate the use of the shield while approaching a suspect who will be handcuffed by the contact officer.
5. Persons with mental illness: Discuss how a shield could provide cover
6. Vicious Animals: Discuss how the shield could provide partial cover
7. Edged weapon suspects
8. Less lethal deployment situations
9. Officer Down Rescue situations: Single and multiple shield use: Demonstrate how the shield could be used in single and/or multiple shield applications for rescue

B. Demonstrate the use of the Ballistic Shield during Officer Down Rescue situations:

1. Single and multiple shield use: Demonstrate how the shield could be used in single and/or multiple shield applications for rescue
2. Planned and spontaneous rescues

C. Shield retention techniques:

1. Bladed presentation of shield towards suspect to minimize ability of suspect to grab shield
2. Holster or bring weapon to a close contact position.
3. Lower center of gravity by bending the knees and lowering the hips
4. Push and pull the shield.
5. Use solid structure as controlling agent.
6. Shield strikes. In close quarters during shield retention situations, the shield may be used in a manner consistent with other approved impact devices. The target areas are the same as a baton and the use of the shield as an impact device will be evaluated in the same manner.

## **VIII. Qualification methods**

A. Pistol qualification using Live Fire:

Must maintain a safety ratio of one instructor to five students for live fire (static line drills only).

Have the students load one magazine with 16 rounds or two magazines with 8 rounds.

From any approved shield position, using silhouette targets, the student will fire a controlled pair within 8 seconds into the body of the target.

The instructor will give the student eight opportunities to fire two rounds into the target. 15-21 feet distance

A passing score is 14/16 rounds in the body. Arm shots are considered misses.