

The Academy Connection

Where South Carolina Law Enforcement Training is Defined

SOUTH CAROLINA
CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACADEMY



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Director's Message Hubert F. Harrell

Highly publicized recent events and the resulting public scrutiny have brought about serious discussion regarding the laws, training and procedural matters related to handling domestic violence. South Carolina has historically ranked in the top five states with regard to rates of women killed by men in domestic violence incidents. Last year, this State received the dubious distinction of being named at the top of that category despite all efforts to address this issue. Clearly, we have a problem that deserves our attention.

In 2014, our State Legislature initiated strong reform efforts to address issues surrounding domestic violence. The House of Representatives formed a CDV Reform Committee comprised of a number of Representatives from around the State. The committee was tasked with looking at any measures that would bring improvements. Current CDV statutes, law enforcement training and practices, the judiciary and victim services have all been under review. The Academy

made a conscious effort to be aware of these discussions, whenever possible, and offered educational support and testimony pertaining to CDV training provided to officers in this state. The committee was also made aware of the challenges officers face and areas of needed improvement. A copy of the entire Academy domestic violence training curriculum was offered to the members for review and their overall impression was highly positive. More recently, Governor Haley assembled a task force to address the issue and carry on the efforts of the CDV Reform Committee.

With all these efforts in mind, we in the law enforcement community must continue to foster a proactive approach within our agencies. We must recognize basic standards of response to domestic violence incidents and utilize best practices to more effectively deal with these incidents. The CDV Reform Committee, through the Academy, has asked that all law enforcement agencies review their policies and



standards of domestic violence response to ensure that they are utilizing best practices and setting high standards for officer performance. The committee has also requested that all agencies be urged to implement policies and disciplinary measures that are designed to address domestic violence within the law enforcement ranks.

We must work together to insure that the victims of domestic violence are treated with dignity and respect and that every possible effort within the law is made to prosecute abusers.

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Director's Message Continued

To that end, the committee is considering changes in domestic violence laws, laws governing setting bond, victim services, changes in penalties for infractions, new mandates regarding prosecution, and additional requirements for judicial training. The days and months ahead of this legislative session may lead to some significant changes in South Carolina. Rest assured, the Academy will keep the law enforcement community informed of any changes that affect our response to domestic violence and will seek to foster the highest quality of service for the citizens of South Carolina.

This is your Academy.

Non-Fatal Strangulations: An Indicator of Future Domestic Homicide and Law Enforcement Critical Incidents

By: Brian Bennett

Law enforcement agencies respond to domestic violence calls almost every day. Each case has its own unique facts and circumstances that must be considered. The lethality of a domestic violence relationship is a real one. Is it just relegated to the victim? Law enforcement must recognize that all domestic violence calls have the potential to be a homicide but of whom? Victims of domestic violence are often under threat, but in response to a domestic violence call an officer is under threat as well. Officers have been killed and they may have to employ lethal force against an abuser.

There are indicators in domestic violence relationships that point to increased lethality. One indicator that often goes undetected is the act of strangulation. Officers have been trained to look for external injuries on assault victims, particularly on domestic violence calls. One would expect to see external signs of

strangulation because it is a form of asphyxiation characterized by the restriction of blood and/or oxygen to the brain through external pressure (Hawley, 2015). Contrary to popular belief, however, non-fatal and even fatal strangulations leave very few, if any, signs of external injury (Strack et al., 2014, p.88). Frequently, the only indicators of strangulation are internal and therefore harder to detect without proper training. By contrast, choking is an internal blocking of the airway by a foreign object, but this is often used incorrectly to describe strangulation. Subtle signs and symptoms of strangulation are: headache, sore neck, sore throat, trouble swallowing, raspy/hoarse voice, breathing difficulty, vomiting, petechial hemorrhage, loss of bowel control and loss of memory (Strack et al., 2014, p87). A sore throat and/or voice changes are present in 50-70% of evaluated cases (Foley, 2015, p89). Repeated acts of non-fatal

strangulation lead to long term behavioral, neurological and psychological disorders (Strack et al., 2014, p87).

In the realm of domestic violence, what does the act of strangulation tell us? Many domestic violence abusers do not use the act of strangulation to kill, but to send a powerful message that they can kill any time they wish to (Gwinn, Strack, Mack., 2014, p81). A published study through the National Strangulation Training Institute showed that if a woman survives strangulation even once she is 700% more likely to be strangled again and 800% more likely to be killed later. This data was reinforced in the October 2008 Journal of Emergency Medicine. Of particular interest to law enforcement was a finding that 80% of critical incident assaults on officers were by offenders who had a history of domestic violence. Of those, 30% of those also had a

History of non-fatal strangulations against their partner (Gwinn, 2014, p85). Non-fatal strangulation assaults in domestic violence indicate a direct threat of lethal violence toward domestic violence victims and law enforcement officers! The lack of physical evidence in strangulations has caused many to treat it as a minor incident, when in fact, they are some of the most lethal cases we will deal with (Gwinn, Strack, Mack., 2014, p90). Criminal Domestic Violence of a High and Aggravated Nature is the minimum charge that we should consider to address non-fatal strangulations in domestic violence. We should also consider, if applicable, the charge of attempted murder since strangulation is a lethal act. There are a number of agencies who have successfully obtained warrants for the higher charge. Take note that there is no such thing as an "attempted" strangulation. Strangulation is a completed criminal act and should be prosecuted as a felony (Gwinn, Strack, Mack., 2014, p82).

Attorney Casey Gwinn, of the Family Justice Center, probably put it best when he said "The next time you hear the phrase, 'He choked me,' make sure it gets your attention. The victim's abuser has just raised his hand and said, ' I'm a killer.'" Who is the abuser likely to kill? Domestic violence victims and law enforcement officers are both in harm's way. Non-fatal strangulation is one of the best predictors of future homicide (Gwinn, Strack., 2011, p3). If law enforcement can effectively recognize and deal with strangulation in domestic violence, we not only help save the victim but also ourselves.

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Article References:

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On-Line Training Available Through Acadis

In an effort to improve our online training system, the Academy staff have been working to build a system that works with our current Acadis system. Acadis, as you know, is our officer tracking and records keeping system. Acadis has a Learning Management System (LMS) module that allows us to create online training courses such as Legal Update, Criminal Domestic Violence, DMT recertification, etc. The advantage to this system is that it allows the training officer/agency control of what and when their officers do training, it automatically updates their training record upon course completion, and it is more secure because you must have an Academy ID number to create a login. Acadis is more user-friendly because there are no course enrollment codes or additional video codes that are often cumbersome with the current system.

The Academy is requesting that all agencies begin signing up their officers in Acadis and using Acadis to do your online training. We recommend that once you start using Acadis that you stop using ETV Moodle so that it will be easier for the Academy staff to track your training. Detailed instructions on how to use Acadis along with contact information is on our website at <http://www.sccja.sc.gov/7ACADIS/default.aspx>.



JP Strom Award Winners January—March 2015



BLE 626
Christopher A. Holloway
North Charleston Police Department



BLE 626
Daniel R. Malone
Charleston Police Department



BLE 627
James B. Cox
Richland County Sheriff's Office



BLE 628
Jeffrey P. Gore
Myrtle Beach Police Department



BLE 629
Pablo A. Carvajal
Lexington County Sheriff's Office

Basic Class Information

Basic Law Classes

B 631 February 16—May 8, 2015
 B 632 March 9—May 29, 2015
 B 633 March 30—June 19, 2015
 B 634 April 20—July 17, 2015
 B 635 May 11— August 7, 2015
 B 636 June 1—August 28, 2015
 B 637 June 22—September 18, 2015
 B 638 July 20—October 9, 2015

Limited Duty May 18—28, 2015

Basic Detention Classes

BD 350 April 13— May 1, 2015
 BD 351 May 11—May 29, 2015
 BD 352 June 8—26, 2015
 BD 353 July 13—31, 2015

Basic TCO (formerly E-911)

BTOT 194 April 6—17, 2015
 BTOT 195 May 18—29, 2015
 BTOT 196 June 8—19, 2015
 BTOT 197 July 27—August 7, 2015

BASIC LAW SFST DRINKING LAB

With the addition of SFST and Datamaster DMT classes in the new 12 week basic training curriculum, it will be necessary to ask the field to assist us with volunteer drinkers. I believe this training will assist officers in not only DUI detection, but also help officers to recognize when subjects are impaired. This can make a huge difference in what approach an officer will take when handling various situations. We need approximately 250 volunteers per year. I know this sounds like a lot, but that is less than one percent of South Carolina's police population. If you can be of assistance or have any questions please contact Michael Brantley of the Traffic Safety Unit at (803)896-7791 jmbrantley@sccja.sc.gov or Dale Smith at (803) 896-5556 desmith@sccja.sc.gov.

Below you will find a list of dates we need volunteers. We can provide rooms to any volunteer who will need to travel and stay overnight. Alcohol and meals are provided for all volunteers; however, if they desire to bring their own alcohol that is permitted.

Dates for BLE Drinking Lab 2015

April 29th & 30th 2015
 May 20th & 21st 2015
 June 10th & 11th 2015
 June 30th & July 1st 2015
 July 29th & 30th 2015
 August 19th & 20th 2015
 September 9th & 10th 2015
 September 30th & October 1st 2015
 October 21st & 22nd 2015
 November 11th & 12th 2015
 December 9th & 12th 2015



Employee News



Welcome William Janicki new Defensive Tactics Instructor.



Congratulations to Judy Thompson on her retirement. Judy retired with over 32 years of state service.

Academy Renovation Update

By: Lennie Hicks

As part of the Academy's building and HVAC upgrades, the lower level dining hall is receiving a new pitched metal roof and a new air handler. Prior to the metal roof being installed, it was necessary to remove the old air handler from the flat membrane roof. Due to tight working space and muddy terrain behind the lower level dining hall, it was necessary to hire a crane with a 180 foot reach to remove the old air handler by lifting it over the dining hall and west dorm. After removal of the old air handler, a new Trane unit was lifted by the crane into position and mounted on the roof. While the mechanical contractor completes installation of the new air handler, the roofing contractor can proceed with the installation of the pitched metal roof so that the lower level dining hall roof will match the appearance of the other Academy buildings.



A second Academy capital project is on schedule to start in May when the Driving Range 1.3 mile track and side streets will be re-surfaced. The present Driving Range surface was last paved in 1998 and is beginning to show its age. This project should be completed in June.

Over the last year, the Academy has completed installation of nine new air handlers, two new chillers, four Mitsubishi units to replace old fan coil HVAC units and all leaking domestic water lines in three dorms. These facility upgrades were completed with funding which the Director was able to obtain from the Legislature and should go a long way towards improving the comfort level at the Academy.