



V-VICTA®

VirTra - Virtual Interactive Coursework Training Academy®

CONTACT AND COVER CONCEPTS

Training Manual

VirTra

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AUTHOR

Lon Bartel; VirTra - Director of Training & Curriculum

TRAINING COURSE CERTIFICATION

This "Contact and Cover Concepts" training course, developed by VirTra, has been certified by the IADLEST National Certification Program™ on 9/23/2022.

Certification number: 22508-2209



CONTACT AND COVER CONCEPTS

TOPIC

Contact and Cover Concepts

ESTIMATED TIME

3 Hours (up to 8 students and full class presentation).

- Pre-test and introductions (5 minutes)
- Lecture (40 minutes) - PowerPoint provided
- Break (10 minutes)
- Scenario event training (30-45 minutes)
- Scenario test and written test (15-30 minutes)

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE

At the end of the 3 hours of instruction in a video simulation with an on screen contact officer students will take roll of the cover officer and successfully:

- A. Use proper positioning
- B. Correctly identify the threat to the team
- C. Respond appropriately to any threat

CLASS SIZE

Designed for pairs of officers with maximum class size of 8 (4 pairs). If class size is smaller than 8 (4 pairs) scenarios can be cycled through.

The following training plan and lesson plan is designed to be used with the VirTra simulator. Where as many of the techniques have been used over many years in LE, this training plan maximizes training time and leverages the strengths of the VirTra Training System.

The instructor shall first ensure that students are familiar with the presented material. The outline provides the overview of basic Contact and Cover Concepts and is provided to supplement and provide context to the use of the simulation scenarios.

The simulation scenarios are used as a tool to facilitate the understanding of the concepts. The first scenarios will be provided in a slower tempo with the use of the PLAY/PAUSE feature to elaborate on the training points. Once the first simulation is provided in this format the remaining scenarios will be provided to each pair of officers. The Socratic methodology should be used for event debriefing.

“What did you know?”

“What did you see or hear?”

“What did you do and the reason behind it?”

“What would you do differently in the future?”

All officers will be allowed to watch the other pairs participate in the exercise. This is done to maximize the benefit of modeling for adult learners.

CONTACT AND COVER CONCEPTS

SAMPLE STUDENT GROUP SET UP

- A. Officer Yackley and Officer Emerson
 - B. Officer Danninger and Officer Ashley
 - C. Officer Bacon and Officer Adams
 - D. Officer Stephens and Officer Marks
-
- **First Scenario** - Executed in “PLAY/PAUSE” methodology for all students - key concepts are applied and discussed
 - **Second Scenario** - Group A participates while Groups B, C, and D watch
 - **Third Scenario** - Group B participates while Groups A, C, and D watch
 - **Fourth Scenario** - Group C participates while Groups A, B and D watch
 - **Fifth Scenario** - Group D participates while Groups A, B and C watch
 - **Sixth Scenario** - (Practical skills test) Class is sequestered with students brought one at a time (not pairs) to evaluate performance.

SCENARIO BANK TO BE USED

1. “Brotherly Love” (PLAY/PAUSE PRESENTATION)
2. “Disturbed Individual”
3. “Gang Party 300”
4. “Domestic English”
5. “Taggers 300”
6. “Nightmare Alley” (Transfer of knowledge/skill TEST)

TACTICS, TRAINING AND PROCEDURES (TTP)

“BROTHERLY LOVE”

This event will be presented with a play/pause/discuss methodology allowing the presenter to get into the details of:

- “PLAY”
- “PAUSE” 3 seconds into scene and discuss roles/responsibilities
- “RESUME”
- “PAUSE” after subject runs inside
- Discuss role of Cover Officer
- Note distance of Contact Officer
- What threat and threat area?
- “RESUME”
- “PAUSE” once subject exits residence and is grabbed by family member
- Clear lines of fire?
- Witnesses/hostile to others can turn hostile on you or fellow officers
- Follow-through:
 - » Radio procedures
 - » Start EMS
 - » Treat who you can if safe to do so
 - » Secure scene

CONTACT AND COVER CONCEPTS

“DISTURBED INDIVIDUAL”

- “PLAY”
- “Non-lethal Threat” - Branch
- Points of discussion:
 - » Clear roles established?
 - » Lethal/Less lethal responsibilities established?
 - » Communication established with:
 - Radio/Dispatch
 - Subject
 - Each other
 - » Positioning appropriate for the environment
 - » House threat covered?
 - » Verbal direction/control attempted?
 - » Decision making - Supported by training/legal precedent?

“GANG PARTY 300”

- “PLAY”
- NO BRANCH SELECTED - LET IT RUN
- Points of discussion:
 - » Clear roles established?
 - » Lethal/Less lethal responsibilities established?
 - » Communication established with:
 - Radio/Dispatch
 - Subject
 - Each other
 - » Vehicle threats covered?
 - » Verbal direction/control attempted?
 - » Decision making - Supported by training/legal precedent?

“DOMESTIC ENGLISH”

- “PLAY”
- BRANCH SELECTED -“Knife Attack”
- Points of discussion:
 - » Clear roles established?
 - » Lethal/Less lethal responsibilities established?
 - » Communication established with:
 - Radio/Dispatch
 - Subject
 - Each other
 - » Verbal direction/control attempted?
 - » Decision making - Supported by training/legal precedent?

CONTACT AND COVER CONCEPTS

“TAGGERS 300”

- “PLAY”
- “Pull Paint Can From Jacket-Comply” branch
- Points of discussion:
 - » Clear roles established?
 - » Lethal/Less lethal responsibilities established
 - » Communication established with:
 - Radio/Dispatch
 - Subject
 - Each other
 - » Door on building-aware of threat?
 - » Verbal direction/control attempted?
 - » Decision making - Supported by training/legal precedent?

“NIGHTMARE ALLEY” - (NOTE THIS IS THE PRACTICAL SKILLS TEST)

- “PLAY”
- NO BRANCH - let it run
- Points of discussion:
 - » Clear role of Cover Officer established?
 - » Lethal/Less lethal responsibilities established?
 - » Communication established with:
 - Radio/Dispatch
 - Officer
 - » Positioning appropriate for the situation? Back presented to threat areas?
 - » Threat awareness occurred?
 - » Decision making - Supported by training/legal precedent?

I. INSTRUCTOR INTRODUCTION

II. CONTACT AND COVER INTRODUCTION

III. OVERVIEW

A. CONTACT OFFICER

B. COVER OFFICER

C. DO NOT BEND THE ROLES

IV. TTP (TRAINING, TACTICS, PROCEDURES)

A. OFFICER ROLES

B. BALLISTIC COVER AND CONCEALMENT

C. OFFICER POSITIONS

D. TRIANGULATION

E. DISTANCE



F. SUBJECT MOVEMENTS

G. REACTIONARY GAP

V. DUTIES/RESPONSIBILITIES OF CONTACT AND COVER OFFICERS

A. CONTACT OFFICER

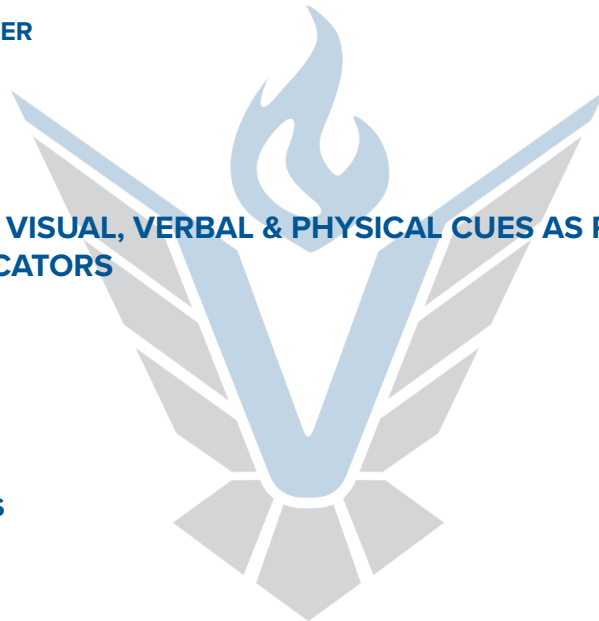
B. COVER OFFICER

VI. BE ATTENTIVE OF VISUAL, VERBAL & PHYSICAL CUES AS POTENTIAL PRE-ATTACK INDICATORS

A. VISUAL CUES

B. VERBAL CUES

C. PHYSICAL CUES



VII. CRITICAL CONCEPTS OF CONTACT AND COVER

A. TEAMWORK

B. COMMUNICATION

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I. INSTRUCTOR INTRODUCTION

Instructor will introduce themselves to the class. This introduction should be no more than 2-3 minutes long and establish why they are qualified to teach the course and how long they have been with the organization. This not a moment to brag, but to build confidence and trust from the attending students. Students shall have a chance to ask questions between each section as well as at the end of lecture.

II. CONTACT AND COVER INTRODUCTION

(Slide 3, 4) Contact and Cover principles were born from multiple tragic incidents in law enforcement history. Once example is the “Grape Street Park” incident where Officer Tim Ruopp and Officer Kim Tonahill made the greatest sacrifice in the line of duty on September 14 , 1984.¹

- A. Ofc. Ruopp contacted two adults that provided alcohol to two underage minor females. Ruopp was writing misdemeanor tickets to each of the men when Tonahill arrived.
- B. Tonahill conducted a Terry Frisk on one of the subjects (subject’s names intentionally left out). When contact was made a struggle ensued that knocked Tonahill to the ground and the subject pulled a 9mm handgun and shot her. He then moved to Ruopp and shot him by his patrol car.

III. OVERVIEW

(Slide 6)

A. CONTACT OFFICER

Business/Administrative part of the team. The contact officer is the communicative aspect of the team. Seems to be the most active.²

B. COVER OFFICER

Overwatch/protection part of the team.³ Cover officer’s job is to keep everyone safe.

C. DO NOT BEND THE ROLES

IV. TTP (TRAINING, TACTICS, PROCEDURES)

(Slide 8-10)

A. OFFICER ROLES

Determine the roles of each officer early in the encounter.

B. BALLISTIC COVER AND CONCEALMENT

Ballistic cover and concealment should be used during approach when available.

CONTACT AND COVER CONCEPTS

C. OFFICER POSITIONS

Officer positions are established related to all subjects not just a specific one. Subjects may have to be moved to facilitate communication and help the Cover Officer keep watch.

D. TRIANGULATION

The concept of “triangulation” is used with the subject/group at the point of the angle.

1. Triangulation is sometimes referred to as the “L” configuration. The Tactical “L” is not a new concept in law enforcement, it is even covered in the Boy Scouts of America Law Enforcement program in Learning for Life.⁴ This mainstay of police tactics is however often forgotten or never followed.
2. Due to environmental factors the angle may not always be 90 degrees
3. This position puts the suspect at the corner of the “L” or the tip of the triangle.
4. This is used to:
 - A. Avoid potential crossfires.
 - B. Help control movement of the subject.
 - C. Causes subjects to have to focus on two areas

E. DISTANCE

1. Contact officer is closer allowing for communication, Terry frisk, document exchange, etc.
2. Cover officer is far enough back to see suspect and potential threat areas.

F. SUBJECT MOVEMENTS

All subject movements should be controlled by the Contact officer.

1. Subjects should not be allowed to move around.
2. Subjects hands should be directed to be kept in sight of the officers.

G. REACTIONARY GAP

“Reactionary gap ” is to be maintained when possible or reestablished as soon as practical. Minimum space needed to ensure that you can properly react to whatever threat presented by a subject being questioned or detained.⁵

V. DUTIES/RESPONSIBILITIES OF CONTACT AND COVER OFFICERS

(Slide 12, 13)

A. CONTACT OFFICER

1. Communicates with subjects
2. Containment of subjects
3. Controls subjects
4. Arrests and searches subjects

CONTACT AND COVER CONCEPTS

5. Communicates with Cover officer
6. Communicates with Dispatch
7. In many cases, Contact officer is Primary for use of Less Lethal options

B. COVER OFFICER

1. Protects the Contact Officer. It is critical to be aware of surroundings.
2. Must be aware of third parties
3. Relays intelligence information to Contact Officer
4. Maintains the “TRIANGULATION” concept
5. Provides lethal cover (Primary)

VI. VISUAL, VERBAL & PHYSICAL PRE-ATTACK INDICATORS

(Slide 15-17)

A. VISUAL CUES

1. Clothing - Fit the person, the environment, the situation?
2. Appearance - Does the subject's appearance provide any context or warnings?
3. Immediate surroundings - Are there potential threat areas, or avenues of escape?
4. Body language - Does the body language communicate fear, hostility or aggression?

B. VERBAL CUES

1. Yelling at officers or others
2. Threatening officers or others
3. Speech not coherent
4. Aggressive or challenging language
5. Tone of voice - what is it communicating?
6. Fear or hostility in verbal dialog
7. Loud pressured speech (ExDS)-Risk factor for Excited Deliriums Syndrome⁶
8. Keening/Guttural noises (ExDS)-Risk factor for Excited Deliriums Syndrome⁷

C. PHYSICAL CUES

1. Bruxism - excessive grinding of the teeth
2. Clenching fist/teeth
3. Tracking officer position
4. Security pats/touches - unconscious touching of their own body where a weapon or illicit items may be.
5. Excessive eye contact
6. Breathing - elevated and deep, short and shallow
7. Facial expressions - indicators of fear/aggression
8. Physiological responses to Drugs/alcohol
9. Muscle rigidity

CONTACT AND COVER CONCEPTS

VII. CRITICAL CONCEPTS OF CONTACT AND COVER

(Slide 19, 20)

A. TEAMWORK

1. Know when to switch roles-switching is ok, blurring is not!
2. Use the right tools for the job. Ensure you have enough officers to control ANY situation
3. Know the role and duties of each position - STAY IN YOUR ROLE!
4. Know your limits
 - A. Your limits
 - B. Partner's limits

B. COMMUNICATION

1. Effective communication between officer to officer or officer to dispatch
 - A. Verbal
 - B. Non-verbal
2. Effective communication between officer to suspect
 - A. Verbal
 - B. Non-verbal

VIII. QUESTIONS?

IX. CITATIONS

1. Law Officer. (2009). Contact & Cover <http://lawofficer.com/archive/contact-cover/>
2. Stockton, Dale (2016). The Power of Contact and Cover. Law and Order. Hendon Media Group. http://www.hendonpub.com/resources/article_archive/results/details?id=5661
3. Blue Sheepdog (2017) Contact and Cover: Are Police Officers Doing It Right? <http://www.bluesheepdog.com/2007/09/22/contact-and-cover-are-police-officers-doing-it-right/>
4. "Arrest and Search Techniques Study Guide 2010", Law Enforcement Exploring. Written with cooperation of IACP and FLETC. <http://resources.learningforlife.org/exploring/lawenforcement/study/arrest.pdf>
5. Grossi, Dave (2013). The Reactionary Gap; Reminders on Threats and Distances. PoliceOne.com <https://www.policeone.com/police-trainers/articles/6258834-The-reactionary-gap-Reminders-on-threats-and-distances/>
6. Di Maio, T., DiMaio. V. (2005) Excited Delirium Syndrome: Cause of Death and Prevention. CRC Press

STUDENT NAME: _____

DATE: _____

1. The two primary roles for officers during any police pedestrian contact are Point and Rear Guard?
A. True
B. False
2. A cover officer has no responsibility during an incident but to obtain identification and run a radio/information check on the subject?
A. True
B. False
3. The contact officer's primary goal is that of overwatch?
A. True
B. False
4. Contact and Cover strategies should only be used on high risk events?
A. True
B. False
5. It is acceptable for officers to blur the lines of responsibility while using contact/cover strategies to speed things up?
A. True
B. False

PRE-TEST KEY
1. False 2. False 3. False 4. False 5. False

Passing score: 70% or more
Any written test and rubric scoresheets shall be kept in department records for 30 years.

CONTACT AND COVER CONCEPTS

STUDENT NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Written Test (2 pts each)

1. Two primary roles for police to assume during citizen contacts are:
 - A. Contact and Cover
 - B. Point and Point Cover
 - C. Cover and Concealment
 - D. Point and Rear guard
 - E. Primary and Secondary

2. The cover officer's role is to:
 - A. Communicate with the subject/s
 - B. Contain the subject/s
 - C. Arrest and Search the subject/s
 - D. All the above
 - E. None of the above

3. The Role of the Contact officer is to:
 - A. Communicate with the subject/s
 - B. Contain the subject/s
 - C. Arrest and Search the subject/s
 - D. All the above
 - E. None of the above

4. In an attempt to quickly clear a call, it is permissible to have the cover officer help perform the functions of the contact officer.
 - A. True
 - B. False

5. It is permissible to blur the roles of Contact and Cover officers.
 - A. True
 - B. False

PRACTICAL SKILLS TEST

	Excellent	Acceptable	Failure
Officer Positioning	5 pts	2 pts	0 pts
Identification of Threat	5 pts	2 pts	0 pts
Response to Threat	5 pts	2 pts	0 pts

Instructor Comments

20 points (out of 25) are required as an aggregate score of the written and practical tests.
Any written test and rubric scoresheets shall be kept in department records for 30 years.

TEST KEY
1. A 2. E 3. D 4. B 5. B

XIII. CLASS SURVEY

TOPIC: CONTACT AND COVER CONCEPTS

INSTRUCTOR: _____

DATE: _____

COMMENTS

CLASS CONTENT	Excellent	Above Average	Good	Below Average	Poor
Class organization					
Class objectives were clearly stated					
Practical activities were relevant to objectives					
All materials/resources were provided					
Topic area was important to Law Enforcement					
CLASS INSTRUCTION					
Instructor was prepared					
Instructor was knowledgeable in the content area					
Manner of presentation of the material was clear					
Effective teaching strategies were used					
Instruction met class objectives					
STUDENT PARTICIPATION					
Level of effort you put into the course					
Your skill/knowledge of the topic at start of course					
Importance of the topic to your assignment					

CONTACT AND COVER CONCEPTS

XIV. CONTACT VIRTRA

If you have any questions/issues with any part of this manual, please see contact below:

VirTra Training Department



295 E. Corporate Pl
Chandler, AZ 85225 USA

Office: 480.968.1488
Email: training@virtra.com

VirTra

295 E. Corporate Pl
Chandler, AZ 85225 USA



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