

May 21, 2018

(via email)

Mayor Arreguin and the Council Subcommittee on NCRIC and UASI,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on our training needs. As we have shared with the subcommittee and the Council, our Department derives tremendous value from the challenge of addressing the two-day long set of scenarios based on real-life terrorism and multi-casualty incidents. These scenarios test our response capabilities, our tactics and strategies, all the while using our department's policies. We feel it's important to not water down or diminish the challenges of the tactical scenarios.

We leverage further benefits from Urban Shield scenarios by having several different officers participate each year. The lessons learned from exposure to the scenarios are therefore spread across the department. Over the 10 years we've participated, we've exposed officers and sergeants (many of whom went on to become lieutenants and captains) to the training, with a demonstrated history of positive outcomes in the 700,000+ incidents we've managed over the past ten years.

Tactical scenarios test our team's planning and leadership skills and abilities, upon which the successful operation of a scenario rests.

Our principal training need related to the upcoming "re-constituted" exercise is the opportunity to participate in a substantial series of tactical scenarios. Should the tactical scenarios be eliminated, we will suffer the loss of these invaluable training opportunities, as there are no similar programs conducted in the U.S.

We believe a "re-constituted" set of exercises could and should include substantial tactical scenario training, which could be administered *without attributing offenders' motivations or beliefs* to the tactical teams. We would like to explore conducting scenarios without ascribing offender motivations or beliefs to the tactical team, and thereby reduce community concerns over the tactical scenarios.

We also recognize and appreciate the value of basing tactical scenarios on real-life incidents. This focus ensures tactical scenarios represent current potential threats that exist in our region, our country, and the world. We also recognize that from a tactical training perspective, motivations are of little importance; far more important are the variables within a given scenario: the number of offenders, victims and hostages; the particular characteristics of the site or location, and the particular dynamics and challenges within a given scenario.

Unfortunately, the reality of the mass shooting or mass casualty threats cannot be understated. The sheer volume of events is daunting: At the April 25<sup>th</sup> Subcommittee meeting, I mentioned several recent mass casualty incidents, including the Toronto

van attack which had occurred just two days earlier, *an incident closely resembling an Urban Shield scenario* faced by our officers (and observed by several members of the subcommittee) last September. Since just last fall, we've seen many mass casualty events, including:

- the Oct. 1<sup>st</sup> Route 91 Music Festival shooting in Las Vegas; 59 dead, 440+ injured;
- the Oct. 31 Manhattan, NY Bike path truck attack; 8 dead, 11 injured;
- The Nov. 5<sup>th</sup> First Baptist Church shooting in Sutherland Springs, TX; 27 dead, 20 injured;
- the Nov. 14<sup>th</sup> Rancho Tehama Elementary School shooting; 6 dead, 12 injured;
- the Dec. 31<sup>st</sup> Douglas County, CO, dom. violence ambush shooting; 2 dead, 6 injured;
- the Jan. 23<sup>rd</sup> Marshall County School shooting in Benton, KY; 2 dead, 14 injured;
- the Feb. 14<sup>th</sup> Stoneman Douglas School shooting in Parkland, FL; 17 dead, 17 injured;
- the March 9<sup>th</sup> Veterans Center shooting in Yountville; 4 dead;
- the April 3<sup>rd</sup> YouTube Headquarters shooting in San Bruno; 1 dead, 3 injured;
- the April 20<sup>th</sup> UPS facility shooting in San Francisco; 4 dead, 2 injured;
- the April 23<sup>rd</sup> Toronto van attack; 10 dead, 16 injured, and most recently
- the May 18<sup>th</sup> Santa Fe, Texas school shooting; 10 dead, 10 injured.

These incidents exemplify scenarios that we need to be prepared to address. Realistic scenario training provides us with experience in addressing threats that we rarely see, but which could occur in Berkeley: An active shooter in a neighborhood or a business district, a school, café, theater, business, or on a BART train; a person using a vehicle to attack others; a threat at a critical infrastructure site; a hostage rescue, search warrant service, or an assault on a dignitary.

Tactical scenario trainings give our officers the opportunity to operate under stress, while responsible for making deadly force decisions, and while testing our response capabilities when all other measures have failed. Tactical scenarios test our tactics and techniques under stress, provide an opportunity to make mistakes and to learn from them, to assess and adjust our tactics, all without resulting in actual harms one may see in a real-life situation.

We are directly responsible for the safety of our community and for the ability to address threats and dangers in a rapidly unfolding, multi-casualty shooting incident. It's imperative that we focus on the training that is valuable to our officers when they are faced with the demands of immediately responding to a multi-casualty incident.

To that end, our training needs include:

- Substantial, varied, realistic, scenario based tactical scenarios
- Test the mental, physical, and technical skills and capabilities of the team
- Include stressful, challenging tactical scenarios

- Scenarios based on real-life terrorism or multi-casualty incidents, independent of the offenders' motivations

It's said that skill comes from a combination training and experience. We have a great deal of successful *experience* conducting operations *without* using force. We therefore desire to balance our lack of real-life experience in multi-casualty events with meaningful *training*, that realistically simulates these most challenging events. We hope that in its re-constituted form, whatever Urban Shield becomes will incorporate a new set of tactical scenario trainings, based on real-life incidents, conducted *without* focus on suspect motivation or belief, to provide the highest level of training and experience for the men and women of the Berkeley Police Department, and our colleagues across the Bay Area, and beyond.

If you have any questions, please let me know.

Andrew Greenwood  
Chief of Police  
Berkeley Police Department

cc: D. Williams-Ridley, City Manager