

15-23 - Tactical Considerations with a Partner

Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department

NEWSLETTER

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TACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS WITH A PARTNER

As law enforcement officers, we understand the benefits of operating as a team when it comes to working with a partner. One of the most significant advantages of working with a regular partner is the ability to pre-plan events and to be prepared for multiple contingencies. In addition, the assignment of specific tasks can also be pre-planned or understood. Partners have the opportunity to learn how the other thinks and how the partner is likely to react in certain situations. The more preparation deputies engage in, the better their performance is likely to be in complex situations.

When conducting an operation such as clearing a building and searching for suspects, deputies learn how to improve overall safety by working together by employing a technique commonly referred to as "searching/blocking." This tactic involves two deputies working together wherein one (searching) deputy leads a search for a suspect(s). The assisting (blocking) deputy provides protection to the searching deputy by placing themselves between their partner and unknown risks. This tactic can be utilized indoors as well as outdoors, and typically involves two or three deputies.

In recent case reviews involving uses of force, pursuits, and deputy-involved shootings, partner-splitting continues to be scrutinized. As a reminder, "partner-splitting" is a term that applies to foot pursuits and occurs when loss of visual contact, distance, or obstacles separate partners to a degree that they cannot immediately assist each other should a confrontation take place.

There are times, however, when tactical advantage is gained or maintained by the **coordinated** separation of partners. In situations where deputies are engaged by a shooter in a fixed or generalized location, deputies may find it tactically advantageous to create distance between each other for the purpose of adding a level of complexity for the suspect. In situations where deputies find it tactically advantageous to maneuver within a dynamic environment, they may consider doing so by coordinating "bounding overwatch." This tactic involves

one deputy providing cover (either visual or cover fire) while the other deputy moves from one position of cover to another. Deputies alternate “bounding” and providing “overwatch,” and in so doing, effectively move within the environment while enhancing their mutual safety.

The key to successful execution of a tactical plan involves effective communication and partners focusing together to accomplish the mission’s goal. While this is better facilitated by two deputies working together on a regular basis, training, standardization, and repetitive performance of skillsets can bridge the gap for deputies who are assigned to work one-deputy units.

As always, the primary goal of each deputy should be to ensure individual safety and the safety of his/her partners.

This Newsletter was created with the assistance of the Department’s Tactics and Survival Unit (TAS).

Information or questions regarding the content of this newsletter may be directed to Field Operations Support Services at (323) 890-5411.

References

Manual of Policy and Procedures (MPP) Sections:

<http://intranet.lasd.sheriff.sdn/intranet/mpp/vol3/3-10/3-10-150.00.htm>

<http://intranet.lasd.sheriff.sdn/intranet/mpp/vol5/5-09/5-09-220.50.htm>