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Perspectives on Policing
with Loraine Burger

SHOT Show 2014: StressVest offers firearms training without projectiles

This lightweight vest and belt set administers a pulsing shock to a person's stomach when 'shot' by a corresponding laser gun

[Stressvest Inc.](#) was founded to provide police and military with realistic firearms training without the use of projectiles by inducing enough pain to create the stress required for realistic force-on-force training.



Members of the StressVest team testing out their gear.
(PoliceOne Image)

The privately owned Canadian company started with the [Shockknife](#) — a mock edged weapon that provided a lasting shock on contact. The officers who developed the product noticed police tended not to fear edged weapon scenarios while training the way they might in a real situation. Using the shock knife, officers felt a minor but lingering pain that changed the no-consequence way they had approached the threat before.

The next step in pain penalty was the [StressVest](#) — a lightweight vest and belt set that administers a pulsing shock to a person's stomach, forcing them to tighten their muscles when 'shot' by a corresponding laser gun.

'I've Been Hit!'

When using other firearms training methods such as Airsoft bullets, officers often didn't know if they'd been shot until after the scenario was over and they could look at their vests and see where a target hit. They therefore wouldn't react in real time as if they'd been hit.

Departments that have begun using the Stress Vest have noticed their officers are reacting to the threat in a more realistic manner, feeling the stress, and even telling their partner "I've been hit" so that both parties can react and take cover.

The belt continues to send intense pulses to remind a suspect they've been hit at random intervals, and the intensity of the pulse increases.

"The StressVest was absolutely incredible. We had 22 participants go through the scenario and the feedback was that it was the best, most realistic training they have ever had!" said wildlife enforcement officer David Irvine.

Skipping the Projectiles

The NYPD, DHS, Air Force Space Command, and the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center are among the departments that now train with StressVest.

The benefits of firearms training without projectiles are ample. It requires no eye protection or other safety gear, it works through glass, the pain penalty is adjustable, and there's no clean up.

With no fear of misfired Airsoft bullets, it's safe to use outdoors and in public settings; no property can be damaged, K-9s can safely be a part of the training, and shooting even at a distance is accurate.

About the author

As the Associated Editor for PoliceOne, Loraine Burger writes and edits news articles, product articles, columns, and case studies about public safety, community relations, and law enforcement. Loraine has developed relationships with law enforcement officers nationwide at agencies large and small to better understand the issues affecting police, whether on the street, at the office or at home.

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