

Students evaluating Non-Lethal Weapons for military operations at Army War College

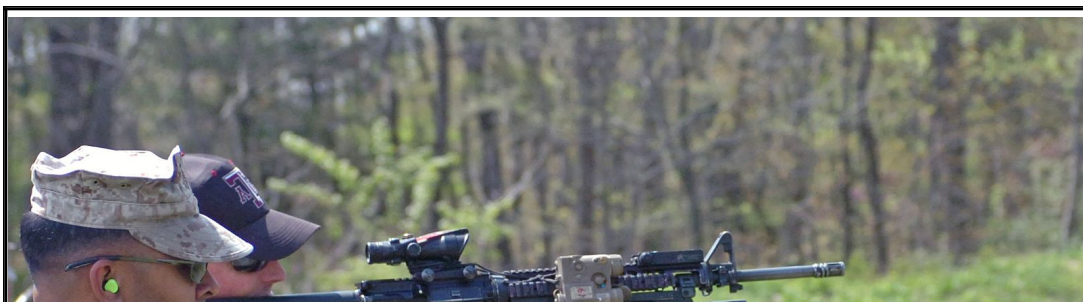
Evaluating Non-Lethal Weapons for military operations at Army War College

April 30, 2015 -- You'd be hard-pressed to find an 'old school' lecture approach to elective education here. After oral comprehensive exams formally close out the core courses, students select the elective courses that hold promise for



immediate value in follow-on career assignments. To characterize these courses, you'd note experiential learning approaches, and collaboration with experts while designing the course and during seminar discussion. Example, here, reflect the theme across electives – to learn through experience and through engagement with leading experts.

Army National Guard Lt. Col. Sean Klahn takes a kneeling position with the M203 grenade launcher fitted with the M1006 sponge grenade and ground dispersal rounds during the firing range segment of the NLW elective, April 30.



For the Non-Lethal Weapon Elective, DMSPO instructor Marine Col. Roger McFadden is collaborating with



the Joint Non-Lethal Weapons Directorate and the Pennsylvania State University to explore the utility of non-lethal weapons. Through

non-lethal technology presentations, immersive case studies – and a few hours on the firing range, today -- 27 students are considering best practices in use of non-lethal weapons across the range of military operations.

Army Col. Will Flucker (front) and Air Force Lt. Col. Carlos Messer (back) take instructions from Marine Capt. Steve John, Joint Non-Lethal Weapons Directorate, Quantico, Va., on the use of the M203 grenade launcher using the M1006 sponge grenade and ground dispersal rounds during the range. (Photo credit, Robert Martin)

On the face of it, it's a no-brainer: non-lethal trumps lethal -- or does it? The gist of the course is to explore the question. The students – among them, Military Police officers, Infantry, International Fellows -- developed case studies of NLW use as a means to better understand applicability in military operations. Soldiers are highly trained to immediately react to threats, using muscle memory. It's a different training challenge when a Soldier, Sailor, Airman or Marine must take time to make a decision between options? NLW are useful at military checkpoints where its use can buy time and space to better understand the situation and decide about follow-on actions. However, with many of today's NLWs having a maximum range of 50 meters, does reliance on NLW put Soldiers at risk from antagonists' weapons? These experience-based considerations inform the discussion within The War College course.



The key is how to use non-lethal weapons, suggested one student about the options now ranging from tasers to the active denial systems. USAWC students are determining the utility and limitations of NLWs and evaluating the current and future role to support military operations.

Army National Guard Col. Ralph Robovsky sites in a FN303 compressed air launcher marking system during the firing range



segment of the Non-Lethal Weapon elective seminar, April 30.

Active Denial Technology includes two systems considered by The War College students. The non-lethal and long-range capability creates a “repel” effects against human targets with minimal risk of injury, using a directed, millimeter-wave energy of a specific radio frequency. The large-scale version of Active Denial Technology has been tested with more than 13,000 exposures on human volunteers both in static demonstrations and in realistic operational

assessments,” according to the Joint NLW Directorate spokesperson Kelly Hughes

Non-lethal capabilities fielded among the Services today include --

* Optical distractors or "dazzling lasers" provide non-verbal warnings to deter approaching individuals at a range of 25-1,000 meters

- * Acoustic hailing devices produce focused, directional sound waves with pre-programmed foreign phrases to deter individuals at a range of up to 500 meters, depending on conditions
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- * Vehicle-entangling nets can be deployed in less than one minute to puncture and lock up the front tires of an approaching vehicle – and, in doing so, give time and space to assess intent.
- * The Vehicle Lightweight Arresting Device can stop 5,500 vehicle moving at 30 mph.
- Non-lethal flash bang warning shots are effective up to 300 meters.

Within the Department of Defense Non-Lethal Weapons Program, the Joint Non-Lethal Weapons Directorate and the Services fund science and technology, research and development, as well as test and evaluation of non-lethal weapons. It is important to note that the Services procure/equip and maintain their non-lethal weapons. The Services are also responsible for training for their service members on non-lethal capabilities.



Army Col. David Segalla (right) fires the M500 12 gauge shot gun using a LA52 joint warning munitions round during the firing range segment of the April 30 NLW seminar session.

Any new weapon the DOD develops is required to undergo a thorough legal, treaty and arms control compliance review prior to fielding. Non-lethal weapons are no exception. “All previously and currently fielded non-lethal

weapons have undergone legal and arms control compliance reviews to ensure consistency with domestic law, and compliance with obligations assumed by the U.S. under applicable treaties, customary international law, and law of armed conflict,” according to Hughes. “In addition, sharing accurate information on the technologies used in non-lethal weapons is an important part of our efforts at the JNLWD.

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