

## CHAPTER 7. NONLETHAL WEAPONS AND CONTROLS

Nonlethal weapons (NLW) are weapons that are explicitly designed and primarily employed to incapacitate personnel or material, while minimizing fatalities, permanent injury to personnel, and undesired damage to property and the environment. Unlike conventional lethal weapons that destroy their targets through blast, penetration, and fragmentation, nonlethal weapons employ means other than gross physical destruction to prevent the target from functioning.

Military police are trained to use the lowest level of force necessary to control incidents in war, peace, and MOOTW. Because military police use NLW daily in the performance of their law enforcement missions, their skills are highly developed for NLW use in military operations.

Military police are the Marine Corps' primary user of NLW and munitions, MWDs, and crowd control devices, such as the riot baton. The traditional MP role in crowd control and law and order operations requires the use of NLW under certain conditions and under restrictive ROE. Accordingly, military police use of NLW affords the MAGTF commander additional flexibility and options for action. Military police also provide the commander a force that can function as a training cadre for the application of NLW.

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### Command Responsibilities

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Commanders must plan, resource, and employ NLW in support of both war and MOOTW. The NLW employment must be well documented in ROE for all operations. Commanders must constantly ensure that Marines understand when and how to effectively employ NLW. Incorrect application of NLW can have significant operational and political ramifications. To ensure that this does not occur, command emphasis by leaders coupled with effective NLW training must be accomplished. Well-trained military police provide timely and clear guidance to Marines using NLW.

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### Employment

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Nonlethal capabilities can be used to supplement and supplant lethal weapons in small-scale conflicts. Although the nonlethal capability is most useful at the lower end of the conflict spectrum, it has significant applicability for major theater warfare and should be employed to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of lethal weapons. Nonlethal capabilities can also be used to punish aggressor states and to facilitate post-war reconstruction.

While complete avoidance of fatalities or permanent injuries is not guaranteed or expected, when properly employed, nonlethal weapons should significantly reduce them as compared with physically destroying the same target. The NLW provide additional options for the MAGTF and may produce a psychological impact. To ensure the best possible solutions to end low intensity conflicts without eroding public support, NLW use must be adjusted to the level of provocation.

The NLW employment is a mind-set, not just munitions. The Marine must know when to employ nonlethal means and not just how to employ them. Additional NLW resource material can be found in FM 90-40, *Multiservice Procedures for the Tactical Employment of Nonlethal Weapons*.

Doctrine, NLW, and concepts of operation are designed to reinforce deterrence and expand the range of options available to MAGTF commanders. Nonlethal weapons enhance the capability of the MAGTF to—

- 1 Discourage, delay, or prevent hostile actions.
- 1 Limit escalation.
- 1 Take military action in situations where use of lethal force is not the preferred option.
- 1 Protect U.S. Forces.
- 1 Disable equipment, facilities, and personnel temporarily.

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## Operational Capabilities

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The nonlethal capability has operational utility beyond deterrence. Some MOOTW operations (e.g., humanitarian assistance, military support to civilian authorities, peace operations, and noncombatant evacuation operations) provide fruitful areas for NLW capabilities. In fact, NLW should be part of the standard mission package in MOOTW. Employment of NLW can range from low- to mid-intensity and from very short effect to lasting effect (which can be reversed when the situation permits). In MOOTW, NLW capabilities could be used for—

- 1 Force and site protection.
- 1 Riot and crowd control.
- 1 Physical separation through buffers or demilitarized zones.
- 1 Interdiction and isolation.
- 1 Operational persuasion.
- 1 Security assistance.
- 1 Strategic preemption.
- 1 Hostage rescue and combating terrorism.

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## Support Capabilities

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Nonlethal capabilities expand options and tools available to the National Command Authorities and commanders. Nonlethal capabilities support the objectives of thwarting aggression and promoting stability and afford expanded crisis and contingency response options by—

- 1 Reducing the risks of perceived excessive military force.
- 1 Promoting international political support.
- 1 Alleviating environmental concerns.
- 1 Enhancing post conflict transitions and termination.

## Flexible Deterrent Options

At one end of the operational continuum, nonlethal capabilities should be integrated into flexible deterrent options, which are a blend of steps taken to deter threats to U.S. interests. These steps usually include military and nonmilitary actions. Employment of NLW can create a firewall between adversaries and minimize confrontation, thus allowing effective

diplomacy. Nonlethal capabilities may also limit the chances of escalation. In the first case, the rapidity with which the nonlethal flexible deterrent options could be introduced would be key. In the second case, timing would be critical.

## Classic Nonlethal Force

Military forces have long used nonlethal force to influence behavior of people and nations to defeat adversaries with minimum use of lethal capabilities and to weaken adversaries to more quickly, easily, or economically defeat them with conventional arms. Examples of classic nonlethal means include—

- 1 Show of force.
- 1 Deliberately delivered information or propaganda meant to dissuade or persuade actions.
- 1 Physical obstacles.
- 1 Noise to create or enhance psychological effects.
- 1 Electromagnetic energy to disrupt communications.
- 1 Smoke and obscurants to mask operations or defeat homing and guidance mechanisms.
- 1 Light or fires used to harass.

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## Effects on Human Abilities

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Nonlethal capabilities disrupt or prevent normal operations by affecting human abilities and senses. Nonlethal capabilities intended for use against personnel will have relatively reversible effects. The U.S. Army develops nonlethal capabilities that do not maim, permanently disable, or kill personnel. Required nonlethal munitions effects on human capabilities include—

- 1 Temporary disorientation.
- 1 Crowd control and/or dispersal.
- 1 Calm or stun personnel.
- 1 Immobilize personnel.
- 1 Sensory impairment.

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## Training

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The successful accomplishment of missions using nonlethal measures requires an understanding of the subject area and extensive preparation. Training for

NLW use requires individuals to understand the limited use of these systems in environments with restrictive ROE. This training should be continuous at all levels to ensure that NLW are properly employed. The Marine Corps trains DOD personnel in the proper application of nonlethal capabilities.

## Development

The Marine Corps and the Army developed a program of instruction for the Nonlethal Individual Weapons Instructor Course (NIWIC), which is the only formal DOD nonlethal training course. Marine Corps military police are directly involved with the NIWIC and in the development of DOD NLW doctrine. Military police are incorporating applicable NLW capabilities into programs of instruction for instructor and user development courses. The NIWIC is designed to provide commanders with instructors well trained in the employment of NLW, who, in turn, can train their Marines.

## Required Topics

Marines employing NLW and force require training in the following areas:

### ***Force Continuum***

Understanding the concept of escalation of force is the foundation for proper employment of NLWs. Nonlethal force offers flexibility in the application of minimal measures required to control the situation in a manner that lethal force does not.

### ***Communications Skills***

Understanding the individual as the base of a crowd's emotional state of mind is fundamental in understanding "mob" mentality.

### ***Crowd Dynamics***

Understanding the dynamics that influence a crowd's behavior is crucial in developing a course of action to defeat that crowd through NLW employment.

### ***Individual Defense Tactics***

Marines require training in knowing how to defend themselves against an unarmed aggressor by employing unarmed self-defense and straight baton tactics.

### ***Oleoresin Capsicum Spray***

Proper training in this organic munition allows a Marine to maintain a standoff position without having to escalate the level of force.

### ***Crowd Control***

Thorough training in formations and tactics is a requirement to defeat a passive or aggressive crowd that allows for mission accomplishment through nonlethal means.

### ***Nonlethal Impact Munitions***

The individual Marine must be proficient in the characteristics of these munitions, which allows a commander to accomplish the mission without adverse effects on a crowd.

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## **Military Working Dog Employment**

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Properly trained and employed MWDs offer the commander the flexible capabilities to ensure the survivability of both the handler and other military personnel. A significant nonlethal capability, MWDs provide additional capabilities to the MAGTF, which are discussed in appendix E. The MWD can be successfully employed to assist in—

- 1 Crowd deterrence and control.
- 1 Drug detection.
- 1 Law and order operations.
- 1 Bomb detection for the U.S. Marines and other Federal agencies.