

Virtual Reality Training Becomes Actuality for Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Personnel

On Friday, October 17, 2014, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Training Bureau proudly unveiled VirTra V-300™ technology, which was recently added to enhance the officer safety training curriculum. This innovative and unique system is a 300-degree police firearms training simulator which immerses a single deputy or multiple deputies in real-life scenarios that a peace officer could face in the field. Members of the media were invited to the Biscailuz Center Training Academy in East Los Angeles to experience this training firsthand.

The media experience was coordinated by Tactics and Survival Training (TAS) Unit personnel regularly assigned to operate the VirTra V-300™ training simulator. Media representatives had the opportunity to be immersed in one of over 100 possible scenarios and make split-second decisions in their own traffic stop, observation, or call to a location incidents.

Possible scenarios in the V-300™ system include, but are not limited to: person with a gun, active shooter with multiple victims, officer ambush, domestic violence situations, and many other incidents a peace officer may face in day-to-day police work. What makes the V-300™ system unique is the realism of each scenario, including the critical simulation of return fire provided by the Threat-Fire™ device. In addition, each scenario can be selectively changed by the computer or may be modified by Tactics and Survival Training Unit staff. It is not a video game and the characters are real actors, not computer-generated.

The simulator consists of five interconnected screens which surround the participant in a 300-degree arena and display life-size actors. Sound equipment and a vibrating training platform add further dimensions of realistic sensations.



Deputies Chad Wagner and Thomas Aragon navigate a scenario in the newly-acquired VirTra V-300™ firearms training simulator at Biscailuz Center.

The system requires no safety equipment, although the simulated weapon system of the V-300™ uses real handguns, shotguns and rifles. The firearms were modified to be filled with compressed carbon dioxide instead of live ammunition. The release of carbon dioxide when the weapons are fired simulates recoiling action, adding a realistic feel to the scenario. The simulated weapon system includes the use of less



Assistant Sheriff Todd Rogers introduced LASD's most current and advanced firearms training equipment.

lethal tools used in police work, such as TASER® or pepper spray. In some cases, the student can successfully navigate through a given scenario without deploying any weapons by simply communicating or giving the appropriate commands.

An unused utility room at the Biscailuz Center Training Academy was refurbished to house the VirTra V-300™ and create a classroom environment. While the training is realistic, the classroom setting is a reminder of the learning environment surrounding the V-300™.

The Tactics and Survival Unit (TAS) is one of seven components of the Training Bureau designed to provide academy recruits and in-service personnel with the most current, innovative, creative and realistic learning experiences available to law enforcement.

TAS Unit instructors can program the V-300™ to dictate each scenario based on a series of “branches.” Based on the students’ responses the system operator can select the appropriate scenario “branch” and make each scenario unique. The V-300™ also has several “play back” components which allow the TAS Unit instructor to review the students’ performance.

The V-300™ will eventually be available to all sworn department personnel, but the TAS Unit’s primary focus will be to prepare deputies for patrol and in-service training for Field Operations personnel. TAS Unit will eventually offer the use of the V-300™ to outside agencies for bilateral training.

“Enhancing our training practices with modern technology is essential in preparing our deputies to handle real life situations in their day to day work,” said Los Angeles County Assistant Sheriff Todd Rogers.

“The newly acquired V-300™ training simulator utilizes life-like ‘shoot/don’t-shoot’ scenarios to capture our effectiveness and help hone our skills,” he added.

“We are honored by having our products selected by one of the largest Sheriff’s Departments in the world,” said Bob Ferris, CEO at VirTra.

”Our passion is creating the most effective simulation systems in the world. We are excited for the opportunity to provide tangible training benefits to Los Angeles County Sheriff’s deputies who continue to provide excellent service to the citizens they serve,” he added.

The cost of the VirTra V-300™ training simulator was \$201,336.

VirTra Systems is a leading provider of firearms simulators to military, law enforcement agencies and other organizations.



Deputies in an active shooter scenario.



VirTra Chief Executive Officer Bob Ferris.



NBC4 News Reporter Patrick Healy giving commands in a scenario of a suspect holding two hostages at gunpoint.