

The Psychological Effect on Law Enforcement Officers involved in Deadly Police-Involved Shootings

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Abstract

Research on the use of deadly force by police officers includes a limited body of literature that examines the consequences. This literature addresses two distinct issues related to the effects of shootings: what officers experience during shootings and what they experience after shooting incidents. Where the first issue is concerned, the research indicates that officers sometimes experience sensory distortions such as tunnel vision, auditory blunting, and altered perceptions of time. Where post-shooting responses are concerned, the literature reports that officers may experience a variety of short and long-term reactions that can include recurrent thoughts about the incident a sense of numbness, trouble sleeping, sadness, crying and nausea. Indeed, the existence of such responses has led mental health professionals who work with officers involved in shootings to identify them as a type of post-traumatic stress response, commonly referred to as post-shooting trauma. This research detailed in this paper was conducted in order to enhance the understanding of officers' reactions to involvement in shootings. It consisted of interviews with 35 Miami-Dade Police Department sworn law enforcement officers who shot citizens during their careers. This research describes the research procedures utilized in this case study, provides responses to a set control questions of the officers who participated in the current study and of the incidents in which they shot other human beings and details about the officers' experiences during and after their incident.

Introduction

Among all public safety and emergency service workers, the unique and ultimate symbol of the law enforcement officer is the gun. No other nonmilitary service group is mandated to carry a lethal firearm as part of their daily equipment, nor charged with the responsibility of using their own discretion and judgment in making split-second decisions to use deadly force in the line of duty. Although watching any typical TV cop show might convince the viewer that most officers regularly fire off multiple rounds without a second thought, in reality the firing of one's weapon in the line of duty is a profound event that almost always leaves a psychological trace and, in some cases, may be traumatic enough to end a career in law enforcement.

Data indicates that in 2018, 992 people were shot and killed by police officers in the United States. Some of these killings are in self-defense, some are accidental, and others are to prevent harm to others. In most cases, taking a life occurs in the context of trying to save a life. The sources of stress attached to an officer-involved shooting are multiple, and include the officer's own psychological reaction to taking a life, the responses of law enforcement peers and the officer's family, rigorous examination by

departmental investigators and administrators, possible disciplinary action or change of assignment, possible criminal and civil court action, and unwanted attention - sometimes outright harassment by the media (Miller, 2006).

The law enforcement profession presupposes exposure to situations that are traumatic. The trauma derives from a law enforcement officer's duty; police chase, homicide, police-involved shooting, etc. A police-involved shooting which resulted in death can result in a long-lasting psychological effect on the officer involved in which there is a lack of study and understanding by both the profession as well as scholars. Law enforcement officers are usually depicted as heroic, brave, and strong individuals. However, officers are prone to emotional distress which in some cases may result in functional impairment both at a personal and professional level. Assistance to law enforcement officers involved in such an event requires knowledge of some of the challenges they face. Hence, it is imperative to gain insight into the psychological impact that a law enforcement officer may experience after such a traumatic event (Miller, 2006).

Literature Review

Although law enforcement undergoes extensive training in handling multiple criminal incidents and investigations, the most extensive job training is not enough to prepare an officer for the sight of a suspect pulling and/or discharging a firearm. Officers may encounter incidents that are typically outside the realm of human experience and irrespective of stress tolerance or occupation. Such experiences can be traumatizing such as being involved in a shooting that resulted in another person's death. When law enforcement officers are obliged to employ deadly force, irrespective of how justified it may be, most officers manifest a degree of anger or guilt after a fatal confrontation. Psychiatrists label the emotional distress that follows the shooting incidence as a "post-shooting trauma" (Kureczka, 2002). The post-shooting trauma can extend beyond the scope of the involved officer to include his or her family. The side effects can surface at home in the form of disillusionment, confusion, insecurity, grief, frustration, depression, and anger. The same elements that generate the aforementioned emotional reactions can also prepare law enforcement officers to handle an array of critical and life threatening incidents (Kureczka, 2002).

One of the effects of such a shooting is post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The post-traumatic distress or what is alternatively known as post-shooting trauma describes anxiety disorder that follows a traumatic event. Most law enforcement officers who undergo a traumatic event exhibit some symptoms of post-traumatic stress, but only some develop the disorder. However, the most prominent effect of these types of shooting events on law enforcement is the critical incident stress. Though some people classify the critical incident stress as a part of PTSD, the psychological impairment ought to be classified on its own (Kureczka, 2002).

Critical incident stress is characterized by some symptoms that are perceived as normal reactions to abnormal situations. Some of the symptoms of critical incident stress include alienation, depression, emotional numbing, flashbacks or intrusive thoughts, and sleep difficulties. The critical incident of trauma is also characterized by isolation or withdrawal, nightmares, and a heightened sense of danger. They may consider themselves as the source of the victim's death irrespective of how wrong the victim was

in his/her actions that resulted in the officer's use of deadly force. Officers who avoid dealing with their emotional reaction may result in re-living their trauma. After the psychological distress, law enforcement officers involved in a shooting event may end with other symptoms that interfere with his or her functions. Some of the outcomes identified include suicidal thoughts, self-destructive behaviors, declined performance, burnout, and heightened absenteeism. Other detrimental outcomes include mental confusion, intense depression feeling, and a growing sense of isolation, feeling of inadequacy, second-guessing, guilt, and self-doubt. The officer may also have increased irritability, rage or anger, risk-taking, underreacting, or overreacting, being hyper-vigilant, and try avoiding emotions and thoughts connected with the incident (Moad, 2011).

Unarguably, these types of police-involved shootings pose a detrimental psychological impact on the law enforcement community. However, despite the experience of distressing and negative post traumatic emotions, exposure to the shooting events has a chance of creating a positive outcome (Zoellner & Marchker, 2006). Though most of the literature examining the effects of traumatic events on law enforcement has focused on the negative attributes of the trauma, recent clinicians and theorists have begun identifying that the traumatic events may trigger growth-oriented reactions termed as post-traumatic growth. Post-traumatic growth describes positive outcomes from an event that changes an individual's perception of the world. The outcome of the new event experienced by a law enforcement officer determined the level of post-traumatic growth. New ideas are produced by the cognitive process leading to the incorporation of the trauma or the event into the world view of the individual. The post-traumatic growth is not a consequence of the disappearance of the distress or the absence of suffering but rather an increased sense of personal strength, new purpose, and direction in life, enhanced spiritual belief, more meaningful interpersonal relationships, and a greater appreciation of life (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004).

There are both ethical and pragmatic reasons to suppose that the very nature of law enforcement work in current society necessitates the expectation that force and/or violence will be used (Papazoglou & Tuttle, 2018). The use of lethal force by law enforcement officers and its demographically disaggregated prevalence among civilians has in recent years captured both public and scholarly attention following cases involving use of lethal force by law enforcement officers. Despite the fact that focus on the extent and depth of the effects on civilians of officers' use of lethal force is justified and should be encouraged, there seems to be a disproportionately lower level of scholarly focus on the extent and depth of the effects of the same on the officers themselves (Tyler, Goff, & MacCoun 2015).

Research into the effects of officer-involved shootings by law enforcement officers' psychological affects in the United States is rather limited. Although the search for relevant literature for this review was far from exhaustive, only three papers reporting primary research results were considered for critical review. In what follows, these three papers are assessed in terms of their strengths and limitations in providing insight into the subject. Recommendations are drawn from the analysis concerning the gaps that currently exist in the research (Warren, 2015).

The first and most recent of these studies was one done by Warren (2015). Done for a doctoral dissertation for a Clinical Psychology Ph.D., the investigator first extensively reviewed literature pertaining to the effects of trauma on the cognitive and affective states

of individuals, specifically law enforcement officers. They also reviewed evidence to the effect that law enforcement officers have been, and continue to be, masked under an unspoken and undocumented code of silence. They attribute the under-researching of the subject to this “code of silence” within law enforcement agencies (Warren, 2015).

That said, the investigator employed a quantitative survey study designed to investigate the effects of frequent exposure to traumatic events (independent variable) and the internalization and externalization of psychologically distressing symptoms and physical and mental outcomes (dependent variables). The statistical association between these variables was tested using linear regression analysis. The study population was the Norfolk Police Department, located in Norfolk, Virginia, and the data collection tools were in the form of independent interviews and questionnaires. Sampling was done randomly (Warren, 2015).

Significant and strong correlations between measures of psychological distress and exposure to traumatic events were found. Up to 26% of the subjects were found to have been experiencing symptoms of clinical level stress, trauma, and self-destruction. Moreover, correlations were found between experience of traumatic events and negative work/life outcomes and between experience of traumatic events and undergoing compassion fatigue. Regarding the latter, it was found that more than half of the subjects were at risk of developing compassion fatigue as a result of the traumatic events that they had experienced while on duty. While this study provides some contextual insights into the possible effects of traumatic events on the psychological effects of law enforcement officers, its lack of external validity and causal analysis limit its value in understanding the subject of this paper. Its lack of focus on officer involved shootings also limits it (Warren, 2015).

Working under the sponsorship of the Department of Justice, Klinger (2001) specifically looked at the psychological effects of officer-involved shootings. The author described the effects of police-involved shootings during and after the incident. He noted that past research indicated that law enforcement officers may experience such psychological affective states as anger, anxiety, and a sense of numbness immediately after a shooting. He further observed that past research evidenced that law enforcement officers involved in such a traumatic event may experience guilt and symptoms of psychological stress long after a shooting incident, evidence that had led some researchers to label these symptoms as “post-shooting trauma.” The study involved direct face-to-face interviews with 80 sampled police officers who admitted to having shot civilians in a total of 113 separate cases (Klinger, 2001).

The study found that more than half of the respondents experienced fear for others and a rush of adrenalin during the shooting while more than a third of them experienced fear for themselves and disbelief during similar shooting incidents. With regard to the officers’ psychological affects after the shooting incidents, found that recurrent thoughts of the event were experienced some point after the event in 85% of the cases studied, although the thoughts were positively nor neutrally appraised by most of the respondents. In addition, anxiety was reported in 42%, and fear for legal and/or administrative repercussions, in 35% of the incidents at some point after them. Euphoria at some time afterward was also experienced, in 29% of the incidents. This took the form of joy at having survived the incident, exhilaration as a form of excitement immediately after the incident and satisfaction at having done their jobs well. On the other hand, sadness

afterward was felt in 22% of the incidents. Other less experienced affective states included a state of numbness, fear for personal safety, guilt, anger, pride, and other emotions. Overall, this study provides insights into the personal affective states of a sample of police officers during and after officer-involved shootings. However, its non-random qualitative study design and small sample size limit the generalization of its results to other cases as well as the drawing of causal inferences from it (Klinger, 2001).

The last study to be reviewed is one by Charoen (1999). After reviewing the pertinent literature of the aforementioned research paper, it reported their study, which employed descriptive analysis in its design. Questionnaires were used for data collection from 86 non-randomly selected Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department officers that have been involved in a police-involved shooting which resulted in death. Several themes relevant to the psychological effects of the officers investigated emerged. One of these was the disbelief or denial immediately after the event. Anxiety also emerged as significantly affecting them, but this was observed to manifest several days after the incident. Like the other two studies reviewed here, this study lacks generalizability and causal inferential power. It, however, indicates findings consistent with the other two studies (Charoen, 1999).

Law enforcement is a profession whose nature in society invites the expectation of violence. Although members of the public and scholars have recently grown to be critical of the effects of the use of lethal force by law enforcement officers on civilians, they pay less attention to the psychological effects of the law enforcement officers involved (Charoen, 1999).

Having reviewed three research literature studies on the subject, several observations were noted. The first is that disbelief seems to be a common affective state in officer-involved shootings immediately after the event. Secondly, anxiety and psychological distress seem to be significant after such an event. Thirdly, existing literature on the subject seems to be low in quality, especially with respect to being able to make quantitative determinations and causal inference about it. Fourthly, existing studies seem to contain issues of generalizability due to their sampling techniques and small sample sizes due to that fact that this topic has not been heavily researched. This literature review attempts, among other things, to contribute to tackling the question of whether, and, if so, to what extent, the latter claim is justified. Police-involved shootings are taken as a proxy for officers' use of lethal force. With this in mind, this review attempts to answer the question asking just how much academic attention psychological effect of officer-involved shootings by law enforcement officers has received. It also considers the nature of this attention and its implications in efforts to promote the mental and physical health of law enforcement officers in order to perform their sworn duty effectively.

Methods

This study was conducted by independently interviewing law enforcement officers involved in a deadly use of force incident, while on-duty, in South Florida. Twenty-five (25) sworn personnel from the Miami-Dade Police Department (MDPD) were interviewed utilizing a questionnaire. The personnel were randomly selected to be interviewed regarding their deadly use of force event. Participants were chosen from incidents that

occurred in Miami-Dade County stemming from 2014 to 2019. All personnel interviewed voluntarily agreed to be interviewed and their personal information, i.e. name, date of birth, etc. was not captured as part of this research. Gender, race and age, at the time of the event, was recorded for statistical purposes only.

Participants were all asked the same questions in order to gather a baseline of response to the questions. The questions were generated and approved to be utilized as part of this research and were the same questions provided to each participant. No modifications or changes were made to the questionnaire. The results of this research were derived from the independent interviews and captured in the "Result" section of this research paper. Only sworn law enforcement officers in which the criminal and civil investigation have been closed were interviewed for this research. All others were exempted from participating due to on-going litigation.

Results

A total of 34 law enforcement officers from MDPD were scheduled to be interviewed between Monday, June 10, 2019, and Friday, August 2, 2019. Twenty-five (25) officers were interviewed, for a response rate of 74%. It should be noted that all personal information, i.e. name, date of births, etc. were kept confidential for this case study. All interviews were conducted in a MDPD interview room and a standardize 26 questionnaires was utilized (See Appendix A).

The first six questions were historical questions pertaining to the date, approximate time, age, race/ethnicity, and years and months of service as a law enforcement officer at the time of the event.

Of the 25 officers interviewed:

- Twenty-one officers (84%) were between the ages of 20 to 29 at the time of the event
- Three officers (12%) were between the ages of 30-39
- One officer (4%) was between the ages of 40-49
- Twenty-two officers (88%) of the officers interviewed were male
- Three officers (12%) were females.

Questions seven through ten asked what rank the officer held, the type of law enforcement agency employed, any previous law enforcement employment and how many incidents was he/she have been involved where their firearm was discharged prior to the event in question:

- Nineteen officers (76%) stated that they were police officers
- Five officers (20%) stated that they were Police Sergeants
- One (4%) stated that they were a Police Lieutenant at the time of the event

All 25 officers (100%) stated that they were employed by a local police agency, MDPD, at the time of the event.

- Nine officers (36%) stated that they had previous law enforcement experience
- Twelve officers (48%) stated that they had previous military experience in the United States Armed Services
- Thirteen officers (52%) stated that they were previously involved in a police-involved shooting in which they discharged their firearm.

Question 11 asked what type of assignment the officers was assigned to at the time of the shooting:

- Twelve officers (48%) stated that they were assigned to general patrol
- Six officers (24%) were assigned to the Special Response Team
- Five officers (20%) were assigned to either the Crime Suppression Team or Gang Unit
- Two officers (8%) were assigned to the Detective Division

Question 12 asked the law enforcement officer the type of weapon the subject was armed with at the time of the event:

- Twenty officers (80%) stated that the subject was armed with a firearm
- Two officers (8%) stated that the subject had a knife
- Three officers (12%) stated that subject utilized a vehicle as a weapon.

Question 13 asked the law enforcement officer how many rounds he/she fired during the incident:

- Sixteen officers (64%) stated that they discharged between one to three rounds
- Five officers (20%) stated they discharged between four to eight rounds
- Three officers (12%) stated they discharged between eight to 15 rounds
- One officer (4%) stated that he/she discharged over 16 rounds.

Question 14 asked the law enforcement officer to identify the thought/feeling he/she experienced during the event prior to firing his/her shot. Responses were chosen from disbelief that the incident was happening, fear for self, fear for others, feeling that "I must survive," rush of strength or adrenalin, and/or other:

- Seventeen officers (68%) stated that they felt a feeling that "I must survive"
- Four officers (16%) were in disbelief that the incident was happening
- Two officers (8%) stated that they feared for others
- One officer (4%) feared for him/herself
- One officer (4%) felt a rush of adrenalin.

Question 15 asked the law enforcement officer to identify the perceptual distortion that he/she experienced prior to firing his/her first shot during this event. Responses were

chosen from the following statements, visual distortion, auditory distortion, time distortion, tunnel vision, diminished sound, slow motion, heightened detail, intensified sound or fast motion:

- Thirteen officers (52%) stated they had tunnel vision
- Four officers (16%) stated they had visual distortion
- Four officers (16%) stated they had auditory distortion
- Three officers (12%) stated that had intensified sound
- One officer (4%) stated they felt diminished sound.

Question 16 asked the law enforcement officer to identify the thought/feeling he/she experienced upon or after firing the first shot. Responses were chosen from the following statements, disbelief that the incident was happening, fear for self, fear for others (e.g. fellow officers, bystanders, etc.), rush of strength or adrenalin, thoughts about other matters, and/or other:

- Twenty-three officers (92%) stated that they feared for others (e.g. fellow officers)
- Two officers (8%) stated that they were in disbelief that the incident was happening

Question 17 asked the law enforcement officer to identify which perceptual distortion he/she experienced upon or after firing their first shot. Responses were chosen from the following statements, visual distortion, auditory distortion, time distortion, tunnel vision, diminished sound, slow motion, heightened detail, intensified sound or fast motion:

- Twenty-three officers (92%) stated that they had tunnel vision
- One officer (4%) stated that he/she had visual distortion
- One officer (4%) stated that he/she had auditory distortion

Question 18 asked the law enforcement officer to identify from the following physical responses he/she experienced within the first 24 hours after the shooting. Responses were chosen from the following statements, nausea, loss of appetite, headaches, fatigue, crying, trouble falling/staying asleep, or other:

- Eight officers (32%) stated that they felt headaches,
- Seven officers (28%) stated that they had a loss of appetite
- Five officers (20%) stated they felt fatigue
- Four officers (16%) stated they had issues falling asleep
- One officer (4%) stated he/she had nausea

Question #19 asked the law enforcement officer to identify from the following thoughts/feelings he/she experienced within the first 24 hours after the shooting. Responses were chosen from the following statements, elation, sadness, numbness, recurrent thoughts about the shooting, fear for safety, fear of legal and/or administrative problems, guilt, nightmares, or other:

- Twenty-one officers (84%) stated that they felt fear for legal and/or administrative problems
- Three officers (12%) stated that they felt guilt
- One officer (4%) stated that he/she felt sadness

Question #20 asked the law enforcement officer to identify from the physical responses he/she experienced between the second and seventh days after the shooting (i.e., within the first week, but after the first day). Responses were chosen from the following statements, nausea, loss of appetite, headaches, fatigue, crying, trouble falling/staying asleep, or other:

- Seven officers (28%) stated that they had trouble falling/staying asleep,
- Seven officers (28%) stated that they had a loss of appetite
- Six officers (24%) stated that they felt fatigue
- Three officers (12%) stated they felt nausea
- Two officers (8%) stated they cried.

Question #21 asked the law enforcement officer to identify from the following thoughts/feelings he/she experienced between the second and seventh days after the shooting. Responses were chosen from the following statements, elation, sadness, numbness, recurrent thoughts about the shooting, fear for safety, fear of legal and/or administrative problems, guilt, nightmares, or other:

- Twenty-three officers (92%) stated that they felt fear for legal and/or administrative problems
- Two officers (8%) stated that they had recurrent thoughts about the shooting

Question #22 asked the law enforcement officer to identify from the physical responses he/she experienced between the eighth day and the third month following the shooting (i.e., within the first three months, but after the first week). Responses were chosen from the following statements, nausea, loss of appetite, headaches, fatigue, crying, trouble falling/staying asleep, or other:

- Eighteen officers (72%) stated that they had trouble falling/staying asleep,
- Six officers (24%) stated that they had a loss of appetite
- One officer (4%) stated that he/she suffered from headaches

Question #23 asked the law enforcement officer to identify from the following thoughts/feelings he/she experienced between the eighth day and the third month following the shooting (i.e., within the first three months, but after the first week). Responses were chosen from the following statements, elation, sadness, numbness, recurrent thoughts about the shooting, fear for safety, fear of legal and/or administrative problems, guilt, nightmares, or other:

- Nine officers (36%) stated that they felt fear for legal and/or administrative problems
- Two officers (8%) stated that they had recurrent thoughts about the shooting
- Four officers (16%) stated that they had recurrent thoughts about the shooting
- Six officers (24%) stated that they had a fear of legal and/or administrative problems
- Four officers (16%) stated that they had anxiety

Question #24 asked the law enforcement officer to identify from the physical responses he/she experienced after the third month following the shooting. Responses were chosen from the following statements, nausea, loss of appetite, headaches, fatigue, crying, trouble falling/staying asleep, or other:

- Eleven officers (44%) stated that they had trouble falling/staying asleep
- Nine officers (36%) stated that they felt fatigue
- Three officers (12%) stated that they had a loss of appetite
- Two officers (8%) stated that they suffered from headaches.

Question #25 asked the law enforcement officer to identify from the following thoughts/feelings he/she experienced after the third month following the shooting. Responses were chosen from the following statements, elation, sadness, numbness, recurrent thoughts about the shooting, fear for safety, fear of legal and/or administrative problems, guilt, nightmares, or other:

- Sixteen officers (64%) stated that they had recurrent thoughts about the shooting
- Five officers (20%) stated they felt anxiety
- Three officers (12%) stated that they had a fear of legal and/or administrative problems
- One officer (4%) stated that they he/she felt guilt

Question #26 was an open-ended question which asked the law enforcement officer to explain when he/she felt that they returned to some sense of normalcy. The question was posed to each individual in the form to provide a date range, i.e. days, months, years, when he/she felt normal:

- Eighteen officers (72%) stated that it took between one to two years after the event to feel normal
- Five officers (20%) stated that it took over three years to feel normal
- Two officers (8%) stated that they have not reached normalcy as of yet

(Note: In reference to the officers which have not returned to normalcy, their shootings occurred six and nine years ago respectively)

Discussion

The preceding pages contain findings about a variety of topics regarding police officers' responses to involvement in a deadly use of force incident which caused death. Specifically, this study shows that law enforcement officers have a fear of legal and/or administrative problems between the second and seventh day of the event. Further study is required to determine if the current anti-law enforcement perception throughout the United States attributes to this fear. In Klinger, D. (2001), there were no thoughts/feelings on this matter which now shows a large disparity in today's day and age. Another noticeable point among them is that the act of shooting another human being typically did not produce lasting disruption in the lives of the officers studied as per this case study. It is indeed remarkable that the officers' involved in more than half of the shootings reported no negative psychological, emotional, or physical responses after one week had passed since the incident.

Another set of implications for the investigation of officer-involved shootings comes from the information about officers' reactions during shootings. Because officers so often experience perceptual distortions and so frequently have imperfect recall about specific aspects of shootings (such as the number of rounds they fired), investigators must be aware that officers may not always be able to provide accurate information about what transpired. This was proven as 72% of the officers interviewed could not recall the exact number of rounds he/she shot. One implication of this is that investigators should not simply take officers' accounts of what occurred during their shooting as infallible. Rather, they should take officers' accounts as a point of departure for the rest of the inquiry and work back and forth between them and other evidence, i.e. bullet trajectories and the location of shell casings, to develop the most accurate possible picture of what occurred.

This case study does shed the light on the lack of training and understanding of officer involved deadly force incidents. As such, this study reinforces the need for a standard Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) curriculum, for all law enforcement agencies, which clearly explains the psychological and physiological changes that may occur to an individual involved in such an event. Agencies should also create a training curriculum, independent of the suggested FDLE curriculum, in order to provide all sworn law enforcement officers, its Departmental policy and procedures, to include collective bargaining agreement(s), involving such an event within their agency.

Law enforcement agencies are also encouraged to create and/or contract a psychological unit which can create annual training to address not only this issue but evaluate officers on a yearly basis for PTSD related to on-duty events. Furthermore, to ensure that officers involved in a deadly use of force event are continuously monitored on a quarterly basis to ensure there is no adverse effects from the event. Due to the stigma that officers are "ok," I recommend at a minimum of a two (2) year evaluation period by the psychological unit.

As the preceding list of implications indicates, the current study has yielded a good bit of useful knowledge about officers' responses to involvement in shootings. One area where the study is of limited utility, however, is on the crucial question of why officers respond the way they do and the difference between this case study and that of Klinger. Although the study did develop substantial information on the correlates of the reactions

that officers experience during and after shootings, it did not yield firm conclusions about the factors of responses.

Lieutenant Benny Solis has been a law enforcement officer for over 18 years, serving the Miami-Dade Police Department (MDPD) and the citizens of Miami-Dade County (MDC). Since joining MDPD, he has been assigned to Uniform Patrol, Auto Theft Unit, General Investigations Unit, Narcotics Bureau, and Homicide Bureau. He currently serves as the MDPD Homicide Bureau Street Violence Task Force Commander and serves as the Department's liaison for all local, state and federal law enforcement agencies to target and address violent crimes throughout MDC. He has held the rank of police officer, sergeant and lieutenant within the Homicide Bureau for over 13 years of his career within the Department. He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Criminal Justice Management from Union Institute & University and earned a Master's Degree in Disaster Management from Florida International University.

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Appendix A

Deadly Force Questionnaire

1. Date of shooting:
2. Approximate time of shooting (military time):
3. Your age (in years) at time of shooting:
4. Sex: (check one) Male _____ Female _____
5. Race/ethnicity: (check one) White ___ Black ___ Hispanic ___ Asian ___ Other ___
6. Years and months as a police officer at time of shooting (e.g., 10 years, 2 months):
7. Rank at time of shooting (e.g., officer, sergeant, lieutenant):
8. Type of law enforcement agency you worked for at time of shooting: (Check one)
Municipal _____
County _____
State _____
Federal _____
Other (e.g., school district, transit, etc.) _____
9. Had you worked for a different law enforcement agency prior to this shooting?
Yes or No
10. How many incidents have you been involved in where you fired your weapon in the line of duty?
11. Activity/assignment at time of shooting: (Check one)
General Patrol _____
Traffic Patrol _____
Special Patrol (e.g., crime suppression, gang unit, etc.) _____
Detective _____
SRT _____
(Please specify operation type; i.e., hostage, warrant service, undercover)
Off duty _____
Other (please specify) _____
12. This item refers to the weapons possessed by suspect(s) (check all that apply)
Suspect was armed with:
Blunt Object (e.g., Bat/Club): _____ Handgun: _____ Rifle: _____ Shotgun: _____
Edged weapon (e.g, Knife): _____ Other: _____ Unarmed: _____

13. Total number of rounds you fired during this incident: _____
14. Check each thought/feeling you experienced during the incident, prior to firing the first shot:
 Disbelief that the incident was happening _____
 Fear for self _____
 Fear for others _____
 Feeling that "I must survive" _____
 Rush of strength or adrenalin - Thoughts about irrelevant matters (e.g., family, friends, past experiences, etc.) _____
 Other (Please Describe) _____
15. Check each perceptual distortion you experienced prior to firing your first shot:
 Visual Distortion _____ Tunnel vision _____ Heightened detail _____
 Auditory Distortion _____ Diminished sound _____ Intensified sound _____
 Time Distortion _____ Slow motion _____ Fast motion _____
16. Check each thought/feeling you experienced upon or after firing first shot:
 Disbelief that the incident was happening _____
 Fear for self _____
 Fear for others (e.g., fellow officers, bystanders, etc.) _____
 Rush of strength or adrenalin _____
 Thoughts about other matters (e.g., family, friends, past experiences, etc.) _____
 Other (Please describe) _____
17. Check each perceptual distortion you experienced upon or after firing your first shot:
 Visual Distortions _____ Tunnel vision _____ Heightened detail _____
 Auditory Distortions _____ Diminished sound _____ Intensified sound _____
 Time Distortions _____ Slow motion _____ Fast motion _____
 Other Distortions (Please describe) _____
18. Check all physical responses you experienced within the first 24 hours after the shooting:
 Nausea _____
 Loss of appetite _____
 Headaches _____
 Fatigue _____
 Crying Trouble falling/staying asleep _____
 Other (Please describe) _____
19. Check all thoughts/feelings you experienced within the first 24 hours after the shooting:
 Elation _____
 Sadness _____
 Numbness _____
 Recurrent thoughts about the shooting _____

Fear for safety _____
Fear of legal and/or administrative problems _____
Guilt _____
Nightmares _____
Other (Please describe) _____

20. Check all physical responses you experienced between the second and seventh days after the shooting (i.e., within the first week, but after the first day):

Nausea _____
Loss of appetite _____
Headaches _____
Fatigue _____
Crying _____
Trouble falling/staying asleep _____
Other (Please describe) _____

21. Check all thoughts/feelings you experienced between the second and seventh days after the shooting (Le., within the first week, but after the first day):

Elation _____
Sadness _____
Numbness _____
Recurrent thoughts about the shooting _____
Fear for safety _____
Fear of legal and/or administrative problems _____
Anxiety _____
Guilt _____
Nightmares _____
Other (Please describe) _____

22. Check all physical responses you experienced between the eighth day and third month following the shooting (i.e., within the first three months, but after the first week):

Nausea _____
Loss of appetite _____
Headaches _____
Fatigue _____
Crying Trouble falling/staying asleep _____
Other (Please describe) _____

23. Check all thoughts/feelings you experienced between the eighth day and third month following the shooting (i.e., within the first three months, but after the first week):

Elation _____
Sadness _____
Numbness _____
Recurrent thoughts about the shooting _____

Fear for safety _____
Fear of legal and/or administrative problems _____
Anxiety _____
Guilt _____
Nightmares _____
Other (Please describe) _____

24. Check all physical responses you experienced after the third month following the shooting:

Nausea _____
Loss of appetite _____
Headaches _____
Fatigue _____
Crying _____
Trouble falling/staying asleep _____
Other (Please describe) _____

25. Check all thoughts/feelings you experienced after the third month following the shooting:

Elation _____
Sadness _____
Numbness _____
Recurrent thoughts about the shooting _____
Fear for safety _____
Fear of legal and/or administrative problems _____
Anxiety _____
Guilt _____
Nightmares _____
Other (Please describe) _____

26. When do you feel that you returned to some sense of normalcy (How you felt and reacted prior to this event)?