

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

[UNIT NAME]

[UNIT ADDRESS]

From: Commanding Officer, [Unit]

To: All Armed Watchstanders and Security Force Personnel

Subj: QUARTERLY DEADLY FORCE TRAINING AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 3591.1G, *Small Arms Training and Qualification*, 12 May 2021  
(b) SECNAVINST 5500.29C, *Use of Deadly Force and the Carrying of Firearms by Personnel of the Department of the Navy*, 20 June 2019  
(c) DoD Instruction 5210.56, *Arming and the Use of Force*, 18 November 2016  
(Incorporating Change 1, 22 February 2019)

1. Purpose. This memorandum satisfies the quarterly Deadly Force training requirement for armed watchstanders and security force personnel assigned to Surface Navy units. It establishes standardized instruction, acknowledgment, and understanding of the legal authorities, limitations, and responsibilities governing the use of deadly force. This training applies to all personnel authorized to carry firearms or perform armed duties, including but not limited to pier sentries, topside rovers, reaction force members, and other security force personnel.
2. **Definition of Deadly Force.** Deadly force is defined as force that a person uses with the purpose of causing, or that a person knows or should reasonably know would create a substantial risk of causing, death or serious bodily harm.
3. **General Policy.** The use of deadly force is a measure of last resort. Personnel shall use only the minimum force necessary to effectively respond to a threat. The decision to employ deadly force must be based on necessity, proportionality, and reasonableness under the circumstances known at the time.
4. **Authorized Circumstances for Use of Deadly Force.** Deadly force is authorized only when lesser means are insufficient or unavailable, and when necessary to:
  - a. Protect personnel performing official duties who are exposed to an imminent threat of death or serious bodily harm.
  - b. Protect other persons when there is probable cause to believe they face an imminent threat of death or serious bodily harm.
  - c. Prevent the actual theft, sabotage, or destruction of assets vital to national security or inherently dangerous property, when such acts present an imminent threat of death or serious bodily harm.
  - d. Prevent the sabotage or compromise of designated critical infrastructure or strategic assets.
  - e. Prevent the escape of a person who has committed or is attempting to commit a serious offense involving death or serious bodily harm, provided there is probable cause to believe the person poses an imminent threat.

- f. Defend against hostile acts or demonstrated hostile intent, consistent with standing rules for the use of force.
  - g. Prevent the commission of an offense that would result in death or serious bodily harm.
  - h. Protect weapons, ammunition, explosives, or other inherently dangerous assets from unauthorized access when loss of control would pose an imminent threat.
5. **Imminent Threat.** An imminent threat exists when a person has the capability, opportunity, and intent to cause death or serious bodily harm immediately. The absence of one of these elements generally negates the justification for deadly force.
  6. **Warning Requirements.** When time and circumstances permit, personnel shall identify themselves as U.S. Navy security forces and issue a clear verbal warning prior to employing deadly force. Warning shots are prohibited.
  7. **Prohibited Actions.** Deadly force shall not be used:
    - a. To protect property that does not meet the threshold of vital or inherently dangerous assets.
    - b. To prevent non-violent offenses.
    - c. As punishment or in response to verbal threats alone.
    - d. When the threat can be safely neutralized through lesser means.
  8. **Firearms Handling and Responsibilities.** Personnel shall:
    - a. Treat every firearm as loaded.
    - b. Keep the weapon on safe until a decision to fire has been made.
    - c. Maintain positive control of issued weapons and ammunition at all times.
    - d. Immediately report any negligent discharge, loss, or unauthorized use.
  9. **Duty to Intervene and Report.** Personnel who observe the inappropriate use of force shall take reasonable steps to intervene when safe to do so and shall immediately report the incident through the chain of command.
  10. **Acknowledgment of Understanding.** Completion of this memorandum constitutes fulfillment of quarterly Deadly Force training requirements. Personnel are responsible for understanding and complying with all referenced instructions and applicable rules for the use of force.

Signature (Trainee): \_\_\_\_\_ x

Signature (Observer): \_\_\_\_\_ x

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ x

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ x