

**14 JULY 2003**



**Security**

**FIREARMS SAFETY AND USE OF FORCE**

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Supersedes 446 AWI 31-202, 28 February 2001.

Pages: 3  
Distribution: F

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This publication implements AFPD 31-2, *Law Enforcement*, and AFI 31-207, *Use of Firearms*. All members of the United States Air Force have the right under the law to use reasonable, necessary force to defend themselves, others and vital resources from attack. The limitations described herein are not intended to infringe upon this right, but to promote weapons safety and prevent the indiscriminate use of firearms IAW AFI 31-207. This instruction applies to all subordinate units, staff agencies, and additional duty positions within the 446<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing.

**SUMMARY OF REVISIONS**

This revision updates all references to all publications mentioned within this instruction (para **3.2.**, and **3.2.1.**); implements the use of “objective reasonableness” standard for assessing the use of force (para **3.3.2.**). A bar ( | ) indicates revisions from the previous edition.

**1. Firearms Safety Responsibilities:**

- 1.1. Clearing procedures will be supervised by a responsible individual knowledgeable of the proper weapons procedures and the weapon.
- 1.2. Weapons use will comply with the Air Force Policy on the Use of Force.
- 1.3. Warning shots will not be fired, except as provided by local theater directives. **WARNING SHOTS ARE NOT AUTHORIZED AT MCCHORD AFB WA.**
- 1.4. When possible, give an order to "HALT" before discharging a firearm.
- 1.5. Do not fire shots if they are likely to endanger the safety of innocent bystanders, except:
  - 1.5.1. In the protection and recovery operations involving nuclear weapons.
  - 1.5.2. During protection and recovery operations involving lethal chemical agents.

1.6. Prior to being authorized to bear firearms, you must thoroughly indoctrinated in their use and the circumstances in which firearms may justifiably be used, and be fully qualified with the weapon .

## 2. Firearms Safety Rules. I will:

- 2.1. Promote firearms safety through my own actions.
- 2.2. Except in combat or other dangerous situations, never carry a round of ammunition in the chamber of any weapon that uses a bolt assembly or slide mechanism, except the M-9 pistol.
- 2.3. Never draw or aim firearms as a joke or jest.
- 2.4. Never horseplay with a firearm, or engage in any activity that would result in any unauthorized acts.
- 2.5. Never use a firearm in any unauthorized manner (e.g., as a tool).
- 2.6. Regard all firearms as being loaded.
- 2.7. Know and use the safety devices of all firearms.
- 2.8. Never aim or point a firearm unless you intend to shoot.
- 2.9. First identify the target and ensure a clear field of fire before discharging a weapon.
- 2.10. Be especially cautious when loading and unloading a firearm.
- 2.11. Never arm yourself with a weapon you're not fully qualified to use.
- 2.12. Bear in mind at all times that my conduct in handling the weapon is my own responsibility.

## 3. Use of Force:

3.1. Personnel engaged in law enforcement for security activities must avoid the use of force where it's not essential to carrying out assigned responsibilities. Use the minimum amount of force necessary when conditions warrant the use of force. Use an intermediate level of force, such as the employment of mace, when warranted. If you use excessive force in discharging your assigned responsibilities, you are subject to administrative and/or judicial action. Authority for such action is found in the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ), Article 92, United States, local, and/or host-nation laws .

3.2. Deadly force is that force that causes, or that you know has a substantial risk of causing, death or serious bodily harm. Use deadly force only as a last resort when facing conditions of extreme necessity, when all lesser means of force aren't feasible or have failed, and only under one or more of these circumstances as set forth in DoD Directive 5210.56, *Use of Deadly Force and the Carrying of Firearms by DoD Personnel Engaged in Law Enforcement and Security Duties*.

3.2.1. Protection of DoD assets designated as vital to national security. DoD designates its assets as "vital to national security" only when their loss, damage, or compromise would seriously jeopardize the fulfillment of a national defense mission. This includes priority A, B, or C assets as defined in AFI 31-101, *The Air Force Installation Security Program*, and assets specifically designated by the installation commander.

3.2.2. Protection of DoD assets not involving the national security but are inherently dangerous to others. These resources are so designated if their theft and/or sabotage present a substantial danger

of death and/or serious bodily harm to others. This category includes weapons, ammunition, missiles, rockets, explosives, chemical agents and special nuclear material .

3.2.3. Deadly force may be used while performing official duties when you reasonably believe yourself and/or others to be in imminent danger of death or serious bodily harm.

3.2.4. Deadly force may be used to prevent serious violent offenses that could result in death or critical bodily harm.

3.2.5. Deadly force may be used when it reasonably appears necessary to arrest and/or apprehend a person suspected of committing an offense of the nature specified in paragraphs 3.2.1., 3.2.2., 3.2.3., and 3.2.4.

3.2.6. Competent authority may specifically authorize the use of deadly force when it reasonably appears necessary to prevent the escape of a prisoner who threatens serious bodily harm and/or death to escorting personnel or other persons. During an escape attempt, you must have probable cause to believe the prisoner is in fact attempting to escape and that the escaping prisoner poses a threat of serious bodily harm to either yourself or others.

3.3. When faced with a hostile attempt to penetrate a restricted-area boundary and/or gain access to a Priority A, B, or C resource, and not receiving hostile weapons fire, challenge, detain and identify all intruders or suspected intruders .

3.3.1. If the challenge is obeyed, turn over suspects to the security forces.

3.3.2. If the challenge is not obeyed and the intruders and/or suspected intruders penetrate a restricted-area boundary, or are inside a restricted area and do not endanger a Priority A, B, or C resource, isolate the intruders and physically apprehend them. Use the standard of “objective reason-ability” as the appropriate standard for assessing the use of force in those circumstances where an individual, or individuals, attempt to steal, damage, destroy, or immediately jeopardize a Priority A, B, or C resource. Use the **minimum** force necessary to stop the threat, including the use of deadly force as a last resort. **NOTE:** See AFI 31-207 for a detailed explanation of the circumstances, restrictions and additional considerations involving the use of deadly force and fire-arms.

**4. Further Assistance.** Further assistance can be offered by contacting the 446 SFS.

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