VIRTUAL WEDNESDAY 2010:
CONCEPTION TO IMPLEMENTATION

Controlled F.O.R.C.E. implements its updated Virtual Training Component demonstrated at the 2010 U.S.N.S.T.A. with CRSC training for
US Army MP Trainers at Fort Leonard Wood

PICTURED LEFT: Virtual Training at the 11th Annual U.S.N.S.T.A. Tactical Training Seminar
PICTURED RIGHT: C FORCE US ABBY and C FORCE US 1A MAGNIFICO (aka Tony Grano) on Second Life

During the 11th Annual U.S.N.S.T.A. Tactical Training Seminar held on December 6-10, 2010, the Controlled F.O.R.C.E. Team, led by Executive Director Tony Grano, presented Virtual Wednesday 2010.

The original Virtual Wednesday presentation conducted two years ago at the 9th Annual U.S.N.S.T.A. Tactical Training Seminar offered attendees a glimpse into the workings of a Virtual Training Component then well into development. The Virtual Training Component at the time emphasized the cost effectiveness of using commercial-off-the-shelf video game systems to augment live training programs. Controlled F.O.R.C.E. and its team of video game associates, collectively called C FORCE US, demonstrated the efficiency of using video game technology to establish fundamental communication skills and concepts of movement to first responders prior to conducting live, hands-on training.

Virtual Wednesday 2010 showed an audience of departmental instructors and training coordinators from a wide variety of law enforcement, military, and security fields how Controlled F.O.R.C.E. has expanded the Virtual Training Component to include a full online support capability beyond anything currently available to first responders.

⟩⟩⟩⟩ PURPOSE

The purpose of the Virtual Training Component is the same now as it was in 2008: **to find faster, better, and less expensive ways of delivering information that keeps students engaged in the learning process**. As Mr. Grano stated in the presentation, "keep the student engaged and the learning curve will sky-rocket."

Mr. Grano also pointed out that "there will never be a replacement for live training; however, there are strategies for minimizing the costs of live training while maximizing the efficiency of actual face time with instructors." These strategies are the core of the Virtual Training Component, which coordinates a variety of technologies, including video game systems, online communities such as the Controlled F.O.R.C.E. SL Training

Center on Second Life and the Controlled F.O.R.C.E. Network, video communication tools, and the U.S.N.S.T.A. Training Resource Center.

Virtual Wednesday 2010, which was a demonstration of years of testing and evaluating the best technologies, and the best ways to use those technologies, to deliver content and keep students engaged, culminated the following week when Controlled F.O.R.C.E. provided on-site instructors, remote instructors, and remote program monitors during Close Range Subject Control training for US Army Military Police Trainers at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri.

⟩⟩⟩⟩ CAPABILITIES

The Virtual Training Component offers the user a variety of capabilities including: **Meeting Spaces** for conferencing and table top exercises; **Training Methods** for groundwork development and maintaining perishable skills; **Support Elements** for content management and student assistance; and **Evaluation Tools** for live distance monitoring and testing and assessment.

MEETING SPACE
Due to travel costs and schedule conflicts, top level Controlled F.O.R.C.E. Instructors traditionally have only been able to meet all in one place to discuss training issues once a year at the annual U.S.N.S.T.A. Tactical Training Seminar.

PICTURED LEFT: CF Instructors take the opportunity at U.S.N.S.T.A. Conference to discuss training issues
PICTURED RIGHT: Virtual Meeting Rooms on Second Life eliminate spatial barriers

Second Life provides a meeting space for Conferencing and Table Top Exercises where people can attend from any location with internet access. Now, Controlled F.O.R.C.E. Instructors can meet at the Controlled F.O.R.C.E. SL Training Center no matter where they are in the world and discuss the latest trends and problems faced by first responders.

TRAINING METHOD
The largest expense in the cost breakdown of training is travel. With the Virtual Training Component, Controlled F.O.R.C.E. Instructors can deliver Groundwork Development content from remote locations. By harnessing the power of internet video communication technology, Controlled F.O.R.C.E. can give students the benefit of learning from multiple instructors and Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) with only the cost of one on-site instructor, or potentially even no on-site instructors.

PICTURED LEFT: Weapons SME Jim Roncal teaches weapon presentation from the holster out of his home in Arkansas
PICTURED RIGHT: Instructor Tony Grano, on-site at Fort Leonard Wood, builds on the basic techniques/terminology already covered

Furthermore, if a student in class has a question about a subject that requires the attention of a SME, the instructor can instantly place a video call to the training office and the student's question is addressed in real time. The student can engage the SME with follow up questions and the SME can gauge the student's reaction to responses for more efficient instruction. Nothing is lost in interpretation, and **no time is wasted**.

SUPPORT ELEMENT

The Virtual Training Component of Controlled F.O.R.C.E. ties together a variety of elements designed to provide the student with prolonged support and continued learning opportunities. Since users have varying levels of computer access and proficiency, Controlled F.O.R.C.E. provides guides who are trained to assist users in finding the information they need. These guides, such as C FORCE US ABBY pictured below, can help users look up content on the U.S.N.S.T.A. Training Resource Center, get information in the Controlled F.O.R.C.E. SL Training Center, interact with other users on the Controlled F.O.R.C.E. Network, or utilize other resources available online.

Controlled F.O.R.C.E. Support Associate C FORCE US ABBY is ready to help students find the
information and resources they need, and keep them engaged in the process

The unique benefit of the Controlled F.O.R.C.E. SL Training Center is that the user and the guides operate avatars to interact with each other. Not only can you see C FORCE US ABBY as an avatar on the screen, but she can see you, or any audience, live via built in camera systems. The use of avatars is important because it helps the student remain engaged during the information gathering / knowledge building process. Users can interact directly with C FORCE US ABBY, who represents an actual Controlled F.O.R.C.E. Support Associate named Abby, instead of just speaking with an anonymous "voice" at the other end of a telephone line.

EVALUATION TOOL

Long term sustainment is a crucial factor of any training program. Not only can sustainment be costly as far as necessary re-certification fees, but failure to sustain a program once it is in place can have damaging liability consequences, not to mention being a total waste of the initial investment into a program.

Instructor Don Roberts monitors the progress of Army MP trainers at Fort Leonard Wood from his home in Illinois

Once Controlled F.O.R.C.E. Instructors have provided the initial hands-on instruction, they can monitor the sustainment of the program remotely. Above, Instructor Don Roberts monitors the progress of Army MP trainers at Fort Leonard Wood from his home in Illinois.

After monitoring the class, Mr. Roberts pointed out that "not only does this capability greatly reduce instructor fees, it is a cost effective way for trainers to have their training evaluated by the Instructor long after the initial training. **Now, we can maintain perishable skills for a fraction of the cost because travel fees such as airfare, hotel, rental car, and fuel are eliminated.**"

⟫⟫⟫ RATIONALE

The two most constricting factors of a training program are time and money. Since the first U.S.N.S.T.A. Conference 12 years ago, Controlled F.O.R.C.E. has been studying and improving ways to reduce the amount of time and cost of delivering information necessary to the development of our nation's first responders. The latest video game and internet technology allows us to do this more effectively than any delivery method we have researched so far. The Controlled F.O.R.C.E. Virtual Training Component offers:

- Ease of Access (Second Life and Controlled F.O.R.C.E. Network are free to join)
- Ease of Use (Support Team is standing by to assist with any issues)
- Reduced Travel (minimizes or eliminates travel costs of students and instructors)
- Maximized Training Time (live training with instructor can focus on hands-on critical lessons)
- Maximized Student Involvement (increases enthusiasm and connection to content)
- Return on Investment - ROI (multiplies training dollar value – "more bang for your buck")

Administrators are looking for ways to move their organizations forward while maintaining current expense levels. Virtual training can drive the ROI on all staff development needed to support operations. Rather than

spending time and money on travel and days off for training, virtualization allows you to take full advantage of time allotted for training. Virtual training touches all parts of the staff development process: conferencing, training, interaction with SMEs, support resources, testing and assessment, and quality control.

Imagine if the U.S.N.S.T.A. Tactical Training Seminar in Las Vegas was accessible online to every First Responder in the nation.

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