

Projectile (Return-Fire) Advantages Over Haptic (Electric Shock)

1. Realism: When an Officer faces a firearm based lethal force situation on patrol, the “Threat” aims a weapon, presses the trigger, and sends a projectile toward the Officer. This is exactly the same scenario that occurs with projectile based return-fire systems. At the very least, no one can say that electric shock is equally, or more realistic. Train like you fight.
2. In a recent survey of Military Special Operations personnel from all Services, every single respondent stated that when they are training for the utmost in realism, they place a projectile based platform in the hands of “Threat” actors. They are shot at, not “shocked” at.
3. Return-Fire systems are more versatile, and can be tailored to the amount of “duress” that you want to place the trainee under. Just having the gun panning back and forth can get the trainee thinking more about movement and cover. Firing an empty gun provides audible cues. The gun can be pre-aimed at cover and fired at it – this provides more cues (rounds impacting) as well as more duress. That’s 3 levels of training stimuli before the Officer is even impacted with a projectile. Electric shock does just one thing – you wear bulky equipment, and get shocked in one or two places.
4. When an Officer “does it right”, he can “beat” a Return-Fire system – just like he can “beat” a firearm on the street. A lot can happen from the time a “Threat” fires a round, to when it impacts: The Officer can move. He can get cover. The round can even miss. That’s realistic, and “winning” by “doing it right” bolsters training. You can’t “beat” electric shock – the button is pressed and you get shocked. It doesn’t matter if you were in the process of moving behind cover, you’re getting shocked anyway. Doing the right thing, and still losing DETRACTS from training. Cover stops projectiles, it doesn’t stop radio waves. Train like you fight.
5. WHERE you get hit, is almost as important as getting hit at all. A Return-Fire system can place a round on every square inch of the trainee. If the impact is in a non-lethal area, the Officer can continue the fight, practice weak side transitions, etc... The scenario continues, additional skills are practiced, and the AAR is much more valuable. What does electric shock do? Ouch, I’m dead? Or does the scenario have to pause while the Officer is told “it’s only in your leg”? Either situation is not very realistic, with questionable training value.

Return-Fire even requires less equipment to train - just a pair of safety glasses. Amusingly this is sometimes used as a detractor, which doesn’t make sense:

1. All Officers are required to wear safety glasses while on the Live-Fire range. They are also standard equipment when using Simunition FX Marking Cartridges in training. I also believe that most Officers wear some type of Sunglasses while on patrol – some even wear clear lenses at night. They don't have time to remove them during a lethal force encounter. Train like you fight. So just how "unrealistic" is wearing a pair of safety glasses with a Return-Fire system? The electric shock systems I've seen, require bulky vests and head attachments. What would you rather wear?
2. Range: The Digi-Fire Simulator Engagement System *can* place hits on a man-sized target, out to about 30 yards. That's 90 feet. How many agencies have training rooms longer than that? Range is not a problem for 99.9% of your customers.

Officers are being shot in the streets with guns – they should be shot at in training, with guns. That's realism. Anything less, is endangering Officer Safety. Train like you fight.