



Firearms Open Day

Orion Firearms Training and MIRIS International, recently held a maritime firearms training open day highlighting the need for relevant firearms training in the UK.

The event provided a better understanding of the levels of training that can be delivered and the high professional standard required from operatives undertaking the course and was well attended with representation from the Home Office, Firearms and Explosives Licencing departments of ACPO, Dyfed-Powys Police, Devon and Cornwall Police and Merseyside Police.

Mike Williams, Managing Director of MIRIS, explained how the Orion course evolved from a need to provide his company's maritime security operatives with demonstrable firearms competency. In the absence of a suitable UK course at the time, Mike and John O'Brien from Orion jointly developed the Maritime Firearms Training Course as the mandatory firearms training packaged for all MIRIS' deployed operatives.

An introduction to the course and safety briefing was followed by a demonstration of the weapon systems used on the course and tour of the training facilities. The demonstration underlined the requirement for full bore 7.62mm calibre training at realistic distances and the levels of professionalism and safe weapon handling which operatives must achieve before they are certified. The more advanced live firing evolutions are all conducted in accordance with established rules for the use of force and underscore the essential defensive role that operatives provide for shipping companies operating in the HRA.

Visitors commented on the marked differences between firing full bore 7.62 calibre weapons in comparison to .22rf sub calibre weapons, which have almost no recoil, delivering a sense of realism leading to improved levels of safety, marksmanship and overall competency in firearms. Feedback from rounds hitting steel reactive targets rather than punching paper targets, combined with realistic water signature from elevated positions, was assessed to closely replicate the challenges that operatives encounter in a maritime environment.