NON-LETHAL WEAPONS, MARITIME REQUIREMENTS

Abstract

Massimo Annati

The maritime forces include not only Navy (surface vessels, submarines, aircraft, shore facilities), but also Marines and Coast Guard as well as other law-enforcement seagoing agencies. Most of the worldwide Navies and Coast Guards are entrusted with maritime constabulary roles, as well as domestic and international law-enforcement, not only during contingencies but even during the very daily routine.

While the requirements for ground-based operations (peace support operations, base security, etc) are mostly the same for the Army counterparts, there are unique requirements for:
→ Boarding parties (both on vessels and oil platforms);
→ Stopping surface vessels (including anything from fast motor boats up to large merchant ships);
→ Protecting shore facilities from sea-borne threats;
→ Protecting naval vessels while in port, anchored, or in slow motion close to shore;
→ Contributing to naval warfare and ship defence, especially during crisis management and standouts (disabling equipment without actual firing).

Those requirements must face, in turn, a different environment:
→ Water surface vs. ground (different for most of riot-control agents);
→ Water has no defined roads (comparably easy movement around and over/under barriers);
→ Ships and oil platforms are already inherently dangerous environments by themselves;
→ Ranges required in naval warfare and in maritime constabulary are much larger than for their ground based counterparts.

Both traditional and innovative (Non-Lethal) means were already deployed during real-life maritime operations: a brief descriptions is provided with the aim to underline the likely margins for developing new solutions.

Keywords: naval warfare, maritime operations, coastal surveillance, boarding