



# Incident Response and After Action

HOW TO MINIMIZE LOSS OF LIFE  
AND TRAUMA DURING AND AFTER AN ACTIVE  
SHOOTER EVENT

# Purpose

The purpose of this resource is to:

- ▶ Familiarize you about trends in Active Shooter/terrorist events
- ▶ Suggest plans and training that will minimize the loss of life in these events

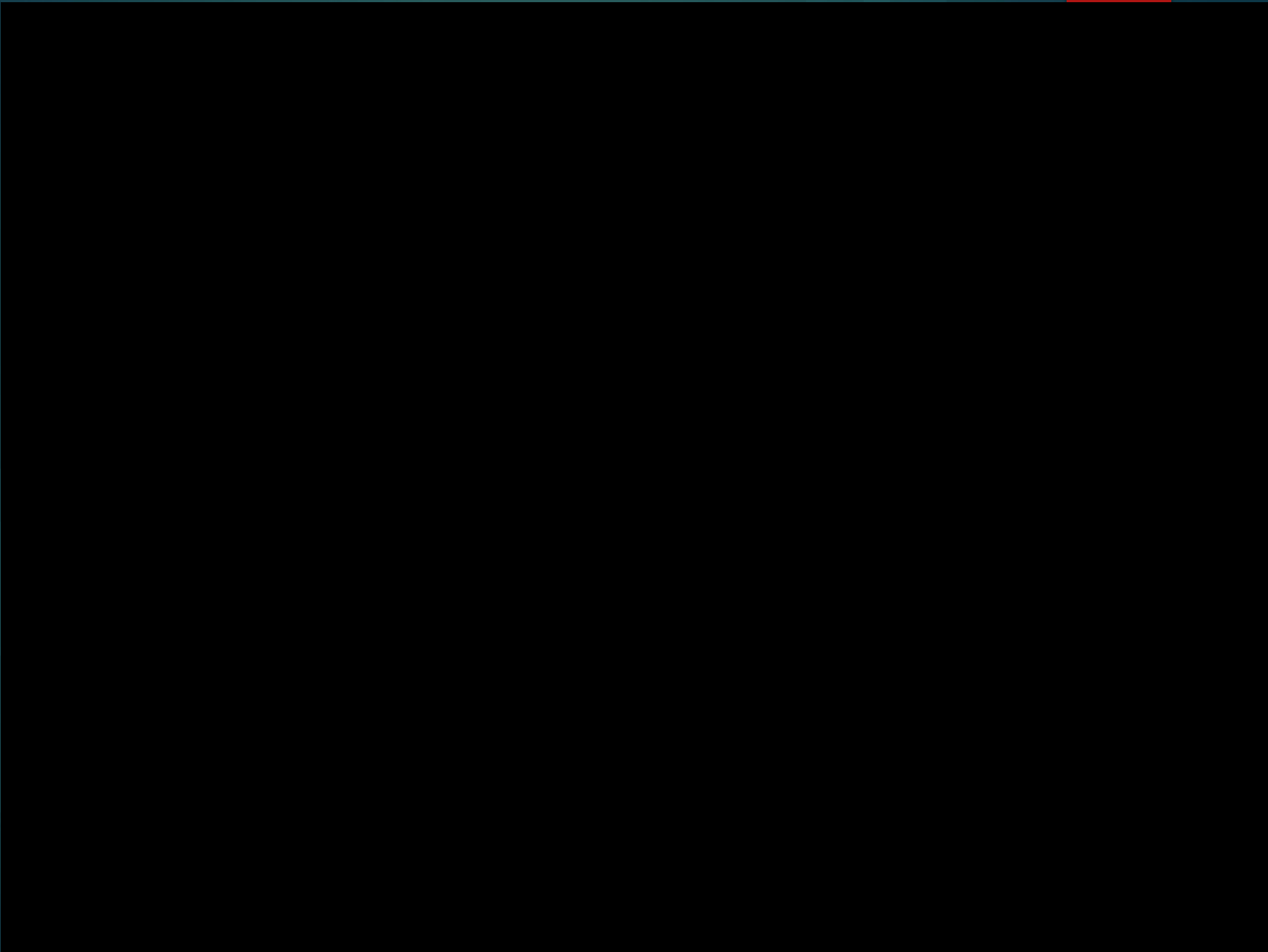
Training for these events is a complex endeavor in which there is no substitute for hands-on work.

We aren't trying to tell you *how* to train and plan, but rather *what* to plan and train for.

# Part 1

## ACTIVE SHOOTER AS WE KNOW IT

A REVIEW OF BASIC PRINCIPLES AND ISSUES



# What is an active shooter?

One or more people are in the process of causing death or injury or posing an immediate danger thereof

- ▶ Not a hostage situation
- ▶ Not a stand off
- ▶ Not a barricaded perpetrator
- But can transition to one of these

# What's different about it?

- ▶ Danger is immediate
- ▶ Cannot wait for SWAT
- ▶ Must act now to save lives
- ▶ A “come as you are” affair for responders
  - ▶ Weapons, equipment, skills, mindset, physical condition
- ▶ You have less than a minute to act

# *Rapid Deployment* response

- ▶ The Rapid Deployment (R/D) active shooter response came out of the Columbine tragedy
  - ▶ Pre Columbine, post SWAT: establish perimeter and call SWAT
  - ▶ Post Columbine: neutralize the threat

# Active Shooter priority change

## Normal LE priorities

1. Officer safety
2. Hostage/public safety
3. Perpetrator apprehension
4. Perpetrator safety

## Active shooter LE priorities

1. **Neutralize perpetrator**
2. Hostage/public safety
3. Officer safety
4. Perpetrator safety



# Rapid Deployment concept

- ▶ Imperative:
  - ▶ Stop the violence NOW
- ▶ Theory of operation:
  - ▶ Enter structure with minimally safe team
  - ▶ Move quickly to sounds/source of violence
  - ▶ Search only when source of violence unknown
  - ▶ Move past victims and threats (IEDs, etc.)
  - ▶ Engage and neutralize perpetrators

# Reality

- ▶ It may be one or two officers responding. It may be five or six...
- ▶ We can't wait for ICS or supervisor
- ▶ No rescue team
- ▶ Chaos will reign

# As you move...

- ▶ Workers will be running past you
  - ▶ Gather Intel
    - ▶ Where? How many? Race? Sex? Weapons? Clothing?
- ▶ Pass by injured, dead and dying
  - ▶ Might be your friends, relatives, or even children
- ▶ IEDs
- ▶ Sprinklers will be spraying, noises will be loud, (fire alarms) ...chaos will be everywhere
  - ▶ Focus on your goal of survival
- Communicate with others if at all possible

# Avoidance

- If bad guys are shooting, you know where they are – Get as far away as you can...
  - Consider shelter in place
- If they are not shooting
  - Stronger consideration for sheltering in place

# Typical mistakes

- ▶ Sheltering in an unsafe location
- ▶ Not thinking of your options
- ▶ Not moving fast enough to get out of harm's way
- ▶ Failing to communicate with others
- ▶ Moving into the line of fire
- ▶ Not listening to officers commands
- ***Training is the key!***

# Non-active shooter events

- ▶ Life NOT in imminent danger
- ▶ Police isolate and contain subject
- ▶ Call in specialized resources
- ▶ Use the 4Cs: Contain/Control/Communicate/Call SWAT

# To ponder...

1. These skills are perishable. Do you have a policy and schedule for regular training?  
(Active Shooter, Workplace Violence, Earthquake Preparedness)
2. Do you have a program in place to assist those who have been exposed to the violence?  
Consider EAP resources

# \* conclusions

- ▶ Most incidents are over within a few moments
- ▶ Immediate action by on-scene officers most likely to have positive effect
- ▶ Stress from events can have a lifetime effect. Be prepared to assist your employees (and yourself) in advance of...



# Since 2003

- ▶ Multiple active shooter incidents per year
- ▶ In most, all killing was done before the first officers got to the scene

# Another consideration...

- ▶ The most important thing you can do to save lives is **pre-event** training with facilities, so that you take action immediately to execute your plans

# Prepared staff is the key

- ▶ The truth is that supervisors can do more to mitigate the loss of life than the police, due to being prepared and promote training opportunities prior to the shots being fired
- ▶ Training the employees in every office in how to recognize, react to and prevent active shooter events is CRITICAL
- ▶ Passing out a comprehensive safety plan to employees is simply not enough preparation/training for an active shooter event!
- ▶ Training EVERY employee is paramount

# Part 2

## ACTIVE SHOOTER AS A TERRORIST EVENT

WHERE WE'RE HEADED...

# Mumbai... *Writing's on the wall...*

- ▶ Until now in the U.S., active shooter incidents have been crimes perpetrated by individuals for their own purposes
- ▶ Future active shooter incidents will include multiple suspects trying to inflict mass casualties

# 4/5GW and active shooters

- ▶ Active shooter *tactics* are essentially the same as terrorist *tactics*: kill a lot of innocent people indiscriminately
- ▶ But a 4/5GW terrorist incident will be better planned and resourced than a lone (or a couple of) active shooter(s)

# What to expect?

- ▶ Our enemies freely tell us what they are planning and want to accomplish!
- ▶ We have merely to pay attention... and come out of denial

# Captured al-Qaeda tapes

- ▶ Produced for internal use, not propaganda
- ▶ Included:
  - ▶ Live-fire room entry
  - ▶ Live-fire/role-player scenarios
    - ▶ Any resistance was met with being shot
  - ▶ Assassination scenarios
  - ▶ Kidnapping training
  - ▶ No presumed compliance from victims
  - ▶ Explosives planting
  - ▶ Prisoner handling: search, control and execution



# al-Qaeda tapes (2)

- ▶ Commands given in English
- ▶ Prisoners begging for their lives in English
- ▶ Distraction devices preceding entry
- ▶ Multiple breach points
- ▶ Targeting LE officers in ambushes using “disabled” vehicle as ploy, then sounding horn to initiate assault
- ▶ Scenarios on 6-lane highways at clover-leaves (to facilitate exfiltration)
  - ▶ There are few such highways in the Middle East

# al-Qaeda tapes (3)

- ▶ Security/overwatch elements to shoot responding LE
- ▶ Residential and golf course assassinations
- ▶ Use of storm drains and sewers for exfiltration
- ▶ Much practice on assault of buildings with a large number of occupants, including inconspicuous movement to entry points (weapons hidden)
- ▶ Anyone giving any trouble at all is shot
- ▶ Executing hostages in front of the media
- ▶ Often no exfiltration plans for buildings – they plan to kill everyone and die in place

# Take-home lesson

While terrorist plans for large-scale events including WMD are certainly in place...

**They are preparing smaller-scale attacks by small groups with various small arms and planted explosives in populated buildings**

# Values versus Preparation

## ▶ Our Values

- ▶ The most sacred thing to us are our children and families Coworkers are a close second...
- ▶ Killing hundreds of people would boost the terrorist's morale and lower ours, leaving us stunned

## ▶ Our Lack of Preparation

- ▶ Police are generally not prepared for large scale acts of aggression
- ▶ Society hasn't come to grips with terrorism on U.S. soil

# School assault model- Beslan

- ▶ A dress rehearsal had already taken place in 2004 in Beslan, Russia where 172 children were killed
- ▶ Large buildings with complicated floor plans are preferred—they are harder to counter assault
- ▶ In Beslan, over 1,000 people were held hostage by 100 terrorists for three days without food or water

# Beslan lessons

- ▶ Terrorists were well prepared
- ▶ Reconnaissance started months in advance
- ▶ Gained tactical superiority quickly
- ▶ Excellent tactics were employed
- ▶ Terrorists were well trained

# What's likely here?

- ▶ Terrorists striking simultaneously at multiple locations, or:
- ▶ a Beslan-type attack with fewer terrorists but better bombs
- ▶ Preferred targets are states that do not allow concealed carry of firearms, have no hunting culture, and where the police do not carry rifles
- ▶ Rural areas are favored because of the delayed response time for police to arrive in force

# What's likely here? (3)

- ▶ Fully automatic weapons placed in over-watch positions
- ▶ Faux “negotiations” to buy time for fortification and PR value
- ▶ They expect to fight and die there, not negotiate their way out
- ▶ They know that Americans will not assault if “negotiations” are going well



# Skewed priorities

- ▶ U.S. schools extensively guard against fire
  - ▶ Fire drills
  - ▶ Sprinkler systems
  - ▶ Building codes, etc.
- ▶ Yet not one *child* had died from fire in any U.S. school in over 25 years (excluding dorm fires)
- ▶ Well over 200 deaths have occurred by active shooters in the same period here
  - ▶ But training and preparation for these events meets with stiff resistance and denial

# Overall response plan

Four elements:

1. Deter
2. Detect
3. Delay
4. Destroy

# Deter

- ▶ An armed police presence is a strong deterrence against attack
- ▶ Terrorists are willing to die, but they don't want to die without completing their tactical objective. They want a high body count
- ▶ Unarmed security is pointless

# Detect

- ▶ They have to live among us, plan the event and recon the facility. Alert employees are essential.
- ▶ Watch for signs of surveillance on potential targets. Terrorists always conduct recon and may use cameras and camcorders
- ▶ Some terrorists are blue-eyed blonds who may not fit the usual profile
- ▶ Employees should report any inquiries about security practices. It could be a recon event.

# Detect (2)

- ▶ They will plan extensively
  - ▶ Info gathering (libraries, public records, etc.), recon, dry runs
  - ▶ For example, in Miami, two Saudi “students” who spoke English well, climbed onto a school bus and refused to get off. When the police arrived, they said they thought it was a public transit bus. They were probably seeing how long it took police to respond.
  - ▶ Report all suspicious activities to FPS and/or local police
- ▶ Most non-police incident Intel will come in the form of gossip and stories
- ▶ *If in doubt – report it out*

# Delay

- ▶ One police officer firing from behind effective cover inside a federal facility may hold off a group of attackers for several minutes and save lives by buying time for help to arrive and to let others evacuate
- ▶ At the first hint of trouble, the employees should engage in a three step lock-down model
  - ▶ Lockdown is to violence what fire drills are to fire
  - ▶ Move away from the violence. Don't be paralyzed by the event.
  - ▶ Move to a pre-selected secure location(s) to wait for police
  - ▶ *Move again when in danger.* "Lock-down" does not mean hunker down and die.

# Destroy

- ▶ Typically up to the cops...

# Infrastructure/personal issues

- ▶ Many employees are not physically, mentally or emotionally prepared
- ▶ Are you, as a supervisor prepared?
- ▶ Your communication capability is critical
- ▶ Inter-agency plans and roles/responsibilities are crucial—are they in place?



# Where to start?



# Getting started - pick ten

- ▶ Concentrate on the ten most likely locations in your area of responsibility
  - ▶ What buildings?
  - ▶ Office space vulnerabilities
  - ▶ Neighboring offices
  - ▶ Frequented lunch – coffee spots
  - ▶ Other attractions
  - ▶ Outdoor venues: parks, sporting events

# Getting started (2)

- ▶ Initiate a relationships with fellow tenants the facilities manager, officer, contract guards
- ▶ Develop an active shooter plan
- ▶ There are many good active shooter plans out there
  - ▶ IACP, ASIS, NEA, US Dept. of Education, NASRO, Etc.
  - ▶ Even Google will return many good plans
- ▶ Develop a customized plan

# Stakeholders involved

Involve in planning:

- ▶ Primary LE agency
- ▶ Assisting LE agencies
- ▶ Fire/EMS
- ▶ Facility management
- ▶ Professional societies/organizations
- ▶ EMS
- ▶ Hospitals
- ▶ Crisis resources: Red Cross, etc.

# Facility planning issues

Once you've selected a plan template from an appropriate source and identified representatives from each stakeholder group, you'll need to develop a specific plan

The following slides are examples of issues that you should address; this is not an exhaustive list, but simply examples.

# Facility planning issues (2)

- ▶ Distribute to appropriate personnel:
  - ▶ Floor plans
  - ▶ Keys
  - ▶ Facility personnel lists and telephone numbers

# Facility planning issues (3)

- ▶ People don't just "snap"
- ▶ Typical active shooter has longstanding histories of involvement with legal, mental health, and/or substance abuse services
- ▶ Most of these people will not be murderers, but they form a pre-event suspect pool

# Facility planning issues (4)

- ▶ Facility personnel rules and regulations
- ▶ Visitor sign-in and out procedure
- ▶ How will you know who's in the building at any time?
- ▶ Physical security and monitoring
- ▶ Suspicious activity reporting mechanism
- ▶ Monitoring of suspended/fired persons
- ▶ Employee screening: criminal, substance abuse, etc.
- ▶ Counseling services involvement
- ▶ Threat identifications and assessments



# Facility planning issues (5)

- ▶ Establish crisis team at each facility
- ▶ Establish chain of command
- ▶ Establish communication chains and mechanisms
- ▶ Who has control over what? Keys, controls, entrances...
- ▶ Involve maintenance staff: sprinklers, plumbing, electrical...
- ▶ Determine evacuation or lockdown decision process and procedures (address disabled persons, too)
- ▶ Establish evacuation holding sites – use safe room?
- ▶ Determine how to take student/employee/visitor inventory
- ▶ Make up crisis kits: radios, floor plans, student/employee lists, etc

# Facility planning issues (6)

- ▶ How will first observers communicate the threat? To who?
- ▶ How will the threat be communicated to others in the facility? Code words?
- ▶ Lockdown or evacuate? When? How?
- ▶ Consider a kit in each room including color-coded signs with room numbers on them to post under hallway door and outside windows (e.g., red sign means help needed, green sign means no one hurt)
- ▶ Each room should have 2 exits, even if a window

# Facility planning issues (7)

- ▶ How/when will the facility communicate to family members of people involved? When?
- ▶ Should all doors have locks on them?

# Lockdown vs. Escape

- ▶ Currently, a lockdown is often advocated in an active shooter situation. That is, secure the potential victims in a locked room(s). But if it was you or your child, wouldn't you want (them) to break a window and get out of the potential kill zone?
- ▶ Consider evacuation and escape as alternatives to lockdown

# Recommendations- aftermath

Include immediate aftermath planning and training:

- ▶ Treating injured
- ▶ Consolidating victims
- ▶ Managing the scene
- ▶ Training facility personnel to maintain crime scene
- ▶ Protecting/moving all from additional IEDs and other threats
- ▶ Notifying victim's families
- ▶ Arrange for EAP in advance

# EMS issues

- ▶ EMS won't enter an area until it's secure
- ▶ After the shooter is neutralized, it will still take a long time to secure the facility
- ▶ Use uninjured subjects (victims, bystanders, etc.) to hold pressure on bleeding victims

# If you are captured

- ▶ Aggressively escape if you can
- ▶ You may be killed immediately if you don't
- ▶ The intelligence you provide will be invaluable

# Final thought

***“If not me, who?”***

That's the motto of the Russian Special Forces, but it applies to every employee, supervisor; every public safety official and government executive.