

ACTIVE SHOOTER

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I. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS AND GUIDELINES

The goal of police intervention in active shooter incidents is to neutralize the threat(s) by preventing access to potential victims, rescuing injured persons and potential victims, or a movement to neutralize the shooter(s). The goal can be achieved by various means, up to and including, the use of deadly physical force.

While the term “active shooter” is used throughout, this policy applies to all situations where there is an active, ongoing deadly threat, to include those from firearms, explosives, knives, and so forth.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the Everett Police Department, to allow initial responding officers to take immediate action to contain and if necessary, neutralize active shooter incidents.

First Responders must understand and accept the role of protector and be prepared to meet violence with controlled aggression. The Priority of Life Scale is used to guide first responders during the critical decision making process that is required to effectively neutralize any threat.

Priority of Life Scale

1. Innocent Civilians
2. First Responders
3. Actors/Suspects
4. Property

III. DEFINITIONS

Active Shooter: An active shooter is an armed person (regardless of weapon used) who has used deadly physical force on other persons and continues to do so while having unrestricted access to additional victims.

The United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS) defines the **active shooter** as "an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area; in most cases, **active shooters** use firearms(s) and there is no pattern or method to their selection of victims."

Immediate Action Rapid Deployment: The swift and immediate deployment of law enforcement personnel and resources to ongoing, life threatening situation where delayed deployment of personnel could otherwise result in death or great bodily injury to innocent persons. These tactics are not a substitute for conventional response tactics to a barricaded gunman.

Active Shooter Hostile Event (ASHE) Plan: A framework for developing and implementing specific procedures including training and exercising your capability, equipping your response elements, proactive engagement of your stakeholders and evaluating your capabilities. A collaborative planning process involving representatives of all responsible agencies and jurisdictions is a necessary to set the stage for an effective ASHE response.

Driving Force is a term used to help first responders prioritize their actions based upon the **SIM Model** (Security, Immediate action plan, Medical). The situation when first responders enter into a crisis site and have no actionable intelligence driving them toward the known location of the shooter and are faced with medical emergencies requiring immediate life saving intervention, which will take priority.

Casualty Collection Point (CCP): also known as a Field Treatment Site, is a location within a jurisdiction in close proximity to an ASHE site that is used for the assembly, triage, medical stabilization and subsequent evacuation of casualties. It may be used for the receipt of incoming medical resources (doctors, nurses, supplies etc.) Preferably the site should be in the

protected cold zone, close to an open area for air lift if possible, but may be in the warm zone.

Hot Zone: Where a direct and immediate threat exists based on the complexities and nature of the event as determined by law enforcement. An area within range of direct gunfire or explosive device or an unsecured or unsearched area where a suspect could be hiding is considered a Hot Zone. The Hot Zone is an Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health zone. Law enforcement resources (Contact teams, SWAT teams, TEMS specialists) should be the only safety personnel operating in the HOT Zone.

Warm Zone: Where a potential exists, but the threat is not direct or immediate. An area that has already been quickly searched and secured by law enforcement is considered to be a warm zone. The threat still exists elsewhere in the building or venue, but law enforcement has cleared and secured an area to which fire and EMS personnel may be brought in to render life saving intervention to injured victims.

Cold Zone: Where no significant danger or threat can be reasonably anticipated. Determined by utilizing distance, geographic location or terrain with respect to the type of firepower or explosive potential, the cold zone is the appropriate location for the Incident Command Post, Treatment Areas, Staging and logistical functions of the incident.

Incident Command System - or ICS is a hierarchical approach to emergency response that fosters both management and coordination when multiple agencies are involved. It's important that ICS is built from the bottom-up as opposed to the top-down, as ICS often times starts with the first responding unit on the scene until further response assets can arrive. Establishing ICS as soon as possible is critical because it fortifies coordination and leadership between various responders and agencies/disciplines.

IV. PROCEDURES

- A)** It is not unusual for a tactical team to arrive at the scene of a barricaded incident and find that patrol personnel have contained the suspect within a secure perimeter. There is generally time for the tactical team to deploy their personnel without serious concern of the suspect(s) escaping. Once the incident has been isolated, time enables patrol and/or tactical personnel to formulate a structured and deliberate action plan.

However, there are incidents that require immediate action and rapid deployment of patrol personnel prior to the arrival of the tactical team. In these cases delayed deployment can have catastrophic consequences. These incidents often involve an ongoing "shots fired/felony assault or downed officer/citizen rescue". It may also

necessitate the immediate and rapid deployment of law enforcement personnel to contain and prevent the escape of an armed and dangerous person(s).

Due to the precipitous rise in acts of mass violence, they have been termed “active shooter” incidents. They are unique in the sense that the behavior of the suspects is very different from that associated with other violent suspect behaviors. Suspect(s) generally begin to shoot/assault numbers of people, often without warning. The motives for this behavior can range from rage, vengeance, political or mental dysfunction. Sometimes they are never known.

An analysis of these incidents suggest that the typical police response of containment, isolation and negotiation may not be adequate. Unlike most criminals, active shooters are likely to continue to use deadly force until intervention occurs or until the shooter decides to stop.

The active shooter concept represents a shift in patrol response tactics, equipment needs and command protocol. This requires initial police responders arriving on the scene to have the authority and the capability to take action without waiting for command staff or for the arrival of specialty units such as SWAT or Crisis Negotiators (North-Metro SWAT) This policy contains the following information concerning active shooter incidents.

Rationale for Rapid Intervention

The responding officers shall determine whether rapid intervention is legally justified and reasonable. This decision may be based on such considerations as whether or not

1. deadly weapons are available to or have been used by the suspect;
2. victims are under the suspect’s control, are readily accessible, or both; and
3. the suspect poses an ongoing threat of deadly force.

B) Characteristics of and an Active Shooter: The following is a list of characteristics commonly associated with active shooter suspects. The list is compiled from descriptions of past active shooters and not meant to be a comprehensive list describing all active shooters:

1. Active shooters usually focus on assaulting persons with whom they come into contact. Their intention is usually an expression of hatred or rage rather than the commission of a crime.

2. An active shooter is likely to engage more than one target. Active shooters may be intent on killing a number of people as quickly as possible.
3. Generally, the first indication of the presence of an active shooter is when he or she begins to assault victims.
4. Active shooters often go to locations where potential victims are close at hand, such as schools, theaters, concerts or shopping malls. Active shooters may act in the manner of a sniper, assaulting victims from a distance. Active shooters may also engage multiple targets while remaining constantly mobile.
5. Tactics such as containment and negotiation, normally associated with standoff incidents may not be adequate in active shooter events. Active shooters typically continue their attack despite the arrival of emergency responders.
6. Active shooters are often better armed than the police, sometimes making use of explosives, booby traps and body armor. Active shooters are not limited to the use of firearms in accomplishing their attacks on victims. They may use bladed weapons, vehicles, or any tool that, in the circumstance in which it is used, constitutes deadly physical force.
7. Active shooters may have a planned attack and be prepared for a sustained confrontation with the police. Historically, active shooters have not attempted to hide their identity or conceal the commission, of their attacks. Escape from the police is usually not a priority of the active shooter
8. Active shooters may employ some type of diversion.
9. Active shooters may be indiscriminate in their violence or they may seek specific victims.
10. Active shooters may be suicidal, deciding to die in the course of their actions either at the hand of others or by self-inflicted wound.
11. Active shooters usually have some degree of familiarity with the building or location they choose to occupy.
12. Active shooter events are dynamic and may go in and out of an "active" status; a static incident may turn into an active shooter event or an active shooter may go "inactive" by going to a barricaded status without access to victims.

C. RESPONSE GUIDELINES: The following seven (7) tenets set general response guidelines for active shooter incidents. Again, these incidents are sufficiently unique such that their effective handling cannot be totally reduced to procedures. These procedures are not meant to limit conventional police tactics, which are appropriate to a crisis situation. The significant factors regarding these tactics are that they represent a means of intervention available to the officers and there is the potential of elevated risk to bystanders and officers. The risk is acceptable in light of the potential these tactics have for saving lives. Another significant aspect of the active shooter tactical doctrine is that officers arriving at the scene of an active shooter incident are authorized to intervene prior to the arrival of command personnel and special units.

1. **Goal:** The overall purpose of these tactics is to save lives and prevent serious injuries. The goal for police response at an active shooter event is neutralization by denying access to additional victims, rescuing injured victims and/or rescuing potential victims.
2. **Assume Tactical Responsibility:** One initial officer must take charge of the active shooter incident. Assumption of tactical responsibility may be based on rank, expertise or seniority. However, it must be made immediately clear to both the Communications Center (Dispatch) and other officers, who is in charge. An officer of superior rank who is on scene and fully briefed may ultimately assume incident command. Any change in incident command will be made known to Dispatch and other officers.
3. **Situational Analysis:** The officer taking charge must, based on all information available, make a situation analysis. The analysis will be continuous, taking into account new information from Dispatch and observations from officers and citizens. The analysis must lead to a decision as to whether the situation is an active shooter event, whether an opportunity exists for immediate intervention leading to accomplishment of one of the goals listed above, and how responding resources should be employed at the scene.
4. **Incident Command:** No action will be taken that is unplanned or without controls. The first officer arriving on scene will initiate incident command. He/she will initiate the situation analysis and determine initial deployment of responding resources. At least one person possessing all available information on tactical plans will remain at the command post to brief arriving personnel. Command

personnel en route to the incident will monitor the radio to gain information, but shall not obstruct ongoing intervention. Command personnel must be on scene and fully briefed before assuming incident command.

5. **First Responder Tactical Intervention:** When responding to active shooter incidents, the EPD endorses the concept of first responder tactical intervention. It is critical that all officers, supervisors and command personnel are familiar with the definition of an active shooter as well as the tactics deemed appropriate for active shooter response. The traditional uniform responses of contain, isolate, evacuate, and wait for SWAT and Crisis Negotiators may not be adequate in an active shooter incident. The first officer on scene will need to consider the following:
 - a) **Rescue/Contact Team:** First responder intervention will be based on opportunity. Rescue teams will be in the form of officers with an identified element leader. Team movement will be in a controlled and disciplined tactical action under the control and direction of the element leader.
 - b) **Containment:** Dedicated security elements should always be a component of intervention teams. Individual action is discouraged, as it is usually counterproductive to a coordinated, focused response to an active shooter event. Site containment will be left to the discretion of the first officer on scene who assumes incident responsibility and initiates the situation assessment. Containment of an active shooter incident may take the form of officers serving in an "observe and report" capacity.
6. **Active Shooter Site Security:** No location associated with an active shooter will be considered secure until the Swat commander declares it is so. Officers assigned to security functions will maintain positions until properly relieved.
7. **Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT):** When SWAT units are prepared to deploy, the initial responding officers may be relieved or redeployed by SWAT.

D. First Aid

*"The fate of the wounded rests with the one who the applies the first dressing"_Nicholas Senn
1898*

Three phases of emergency tactical casualty care

1. **Hot zone**/direct threat care -
Care rendered at the scene of the injury while both the caregiver and the casualty are under hostile fire.
2. **Warm zone**/indirect threat care
Care rendered not under direct fire
3. **Cold zone**/ evacuation care
Care just prior to and during evacuation of casualty to a higher level of care

In all situations 540* security is the first priority

E. DEVELOPMENT OF INTERVENTION TACTICS:

The Everett Police Department will develop tactics to deal with the active shooter incidents and will provide appropriate training to personnel of all ranks. These tactics will be developed under the following guidelines:

1. Personnel will be trained to conduct immediate assessment.
2. Tactics will conform to and capitalize upon existing skills.
3. Tactics and training will be basic and flexible. All sworn personnel will attend active shooter training. Active shooter training will be conducted in three phases:
 - a) Phase 1: Knowledge/Conceptual.
 - b) Phase 2: Skill Development.
 - b) Phase 3: Mandatory Refresher Training.

F. Command Post

1. The Incident Commander shall ensure that the following actions are accomplished:
 - a. Establish Incident Command.
 - b. Establish communication.
 - c. Identify a staging area for first responders, a second staging area for family members, and a third staging area for the media.
 - d. Identify an additional staging area for the quick response team, if employed.
 - e. Request mutual aid if necessary.
 - f. Organize unified interagency telecommunications.
 - g. Establish traffic control and management.
 - h. Contact appropriate aviation resources to control air space for possible medical evacuation resources and to establish restricted air space for law enforcement use only.
 - i. Request emergency medical assistance and designate a safe staging area for treatment of the injured and evacuation by EMS or medevac.
 - j. Initiate intelligence gathering on possible suspects.
 - k. Select a safe location to place evacuees.
 - l. Summon police chaplains and officers to provide information to relatives of victims.
 - m. Coordinate with owners or officials of the target location for floor plans, site layout, and a roster (including emergency contact information as available) of employees, students, residents, visitors, or others believed to be on-site.
 - n. Assign a recorder to document actions at the command post.

2. When available on the scene, a SWAT team or an ERT may be assigned as appropriate to
 - a. contain the location,
 - b. assist rescue teams,
 - c. help locate suspects or relieve the contact team,
 - d. help locate and safeguard explosives pending removal, and
 - e. provide special weapons and equipment as needed.
3. Additional officers shall be deployed to control access to the location and monitor the perimeter.

G. Debriefing

As soon as reasonably possible after the incident, the department shall conduct a debriefing of essential personnel involved in the incident. The debriefing shall identify both positive and negative aspects of the deployment with the intent of addressing areas in need of improvement and to determine whether changes in operational protocols, policy, or training may be warranted as a result.

F. Training

This department shall provide active shooter training to all sworn and civilian personnel, including simulation exercises conducted in schools and other facilities and partnering first response agencies, where appropriate.