



***ACTIVE SHOOTER  
RESPONSE TRAINING  
Lesson 9.1***



# *Terminal Learning Objective*



Upon completion of this lesson and without the aid of the references, the student will be able to respond to an active shooter scenario



# *Enabling Learning Objectives*



Upon completion of this lesson and without the aid of the references, the student will be able to:

- DEFINE the terms associated with Active Shooter
- DESCRIBE the typical profile of an Active Shooter.
- DESCRIBE the five Stages of an Active Shooter,



# *Introduction*

When we hear the words “ACTIVE SHOOTER” we immediately think of Columbine, but the truth is that there has been over a hundred incidents of “ACTIVE SHOOTERS” since Columbine. As the number of incidents rise along with the threat of foreign and domestic terrorism, we can no longer stand fast and wait for a Special Weapons and Tactical Team to respond and end the threat for us. When an “ACTIVE SHOOTER” occurs, patrol officers will most likely be the first responders on the scene and possible the only line of defense between the victims and the threat.



## *Introduction cont.*



Immediate action must be taken to neutralize the threat and prevent the further loss of life to innocent people. We are police officers and we must act. Make no mistake about it, in an “ACTIVE SHOOTER” encounter you will be in harms way. The concepts that you will learn and practice in this training will allow you to respond with the ability and confidence to end an “ACTIVE SHOOTER” situation while increasing everyone’s survivability rate.



# Definitions



**Active Shooter** - One or more individuals who participate in a random or systematic shooting spree, demonstrating their intent to continuously harm others.

**Immediate Deployment** - The swift and immediate deployment of law enforcement resources to on-going, life threatening situations where delayed deployment could otherwise result in death or great bodily injury to innocent persons.



# Definitions



## Direct To Threat

The tactics used to identify and immediately stop the active shooter.

## Dynamic Situation

The situation is evolving very rapidly along with the suspect's action. Example, shooting and moving.

## Static Situation

The situation is not evolving or fluid – suspect's actions appear to be contained. Example, suspect is barricaded in a room.



# Definitions



## Timeline of Violence

The period of time from the suspect's first violent action until his action is stopped or he/she transitions to another activity.

## Incident Transition

The point in the incident where the "active shooter" stops his/her violent actions and tries to escape or barricade himself.





# ***Profile of an Active Shooter***



- An Active Shooter is an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area; in most cases, active shooters use firearms and there is usually no pattern or method to their selection of victims.
- Active shooter situations are unpredictable and evolve quickly. Typically, the immediate deployment of NSF / LE is required to stop the shooting and mitigate harm to victims.
- Because active shooter situations are often over within 10 to 15 minutes, before NSF / LE arrives on the scene, individuals must be prepared both mentally and physically to deal with an active shooter situation.



# *Stages of an Active Shooter*



- Active shooter is usually not a spur-of-the-moment actor. The person progresses through a number of identifiable stages. These stages may occur in rapid succession or over a period of months, or even years. During the first four stages, security forces may have an opportunity to intervene before the shooter is able to execute the plan. The Stages are:

## **Stage 1. Fantasy:**

Imagining the event and the media coverage about the event and themselves, may post on web sites, writings, artwork boasting at work, and during social events.

## **Stage 2. Planning:**

Selecting a target,--- who, what when and where.  
Select weapons of choice, logistics--- travel, additional weapons, other details in support of event.



# *Stages of an Active Shooter*



## **Stage 3 Preparation**

Obtain weapons and supplies .

May pre-position supplies and additional weapons.

## **Stage 4 Approach**

Traveling to the location—probably armed.

While very dangerous. NSF may be able to stop shooter before anyone is hurt.

## **Stage 5 Implementation**

Shooter is executing plan.

Focused on targets.

Will not stop shooting until out of ammunition, is stopped or have taken their own life.



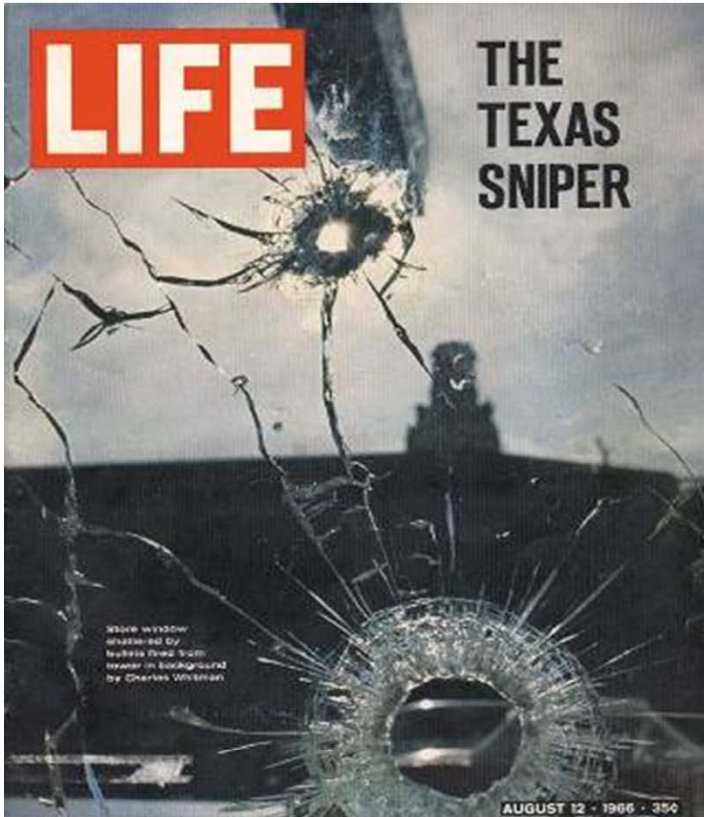
# *Statistics on a Active Shooter*



- 98% of active killers act alone.
- Most will shoot until they are confronted and stopped.
- They will have control of life or death over whom they choose.
- An ambush is highly unlikely; they are there to accomplish their mission – a body count.
- Hostage taking is very rare.
- They do not negotiate.
- They try to avoid police.
- Surrender or escape is unlikely.
- 90% will commit suicide on site.



# Historical Perspective





# ***Texas Tower Incident***



- August 1, 1966
- Austin TX
- Suspect, Charles Whitman
- Killed 14 people (including an unborn baby)
- Wounded 32 (as far away as two blocks)
- Resolved by two police officers





# *Texas Tower Incident*



**On that hot summer day, a 25-year-old student and former Marine by the name of Charles Whitman went to the top of the UT Tower and began shooting. Forty-five people were shot, and 13 of them died that day.**



# ***Columbine High School Littleton CO***



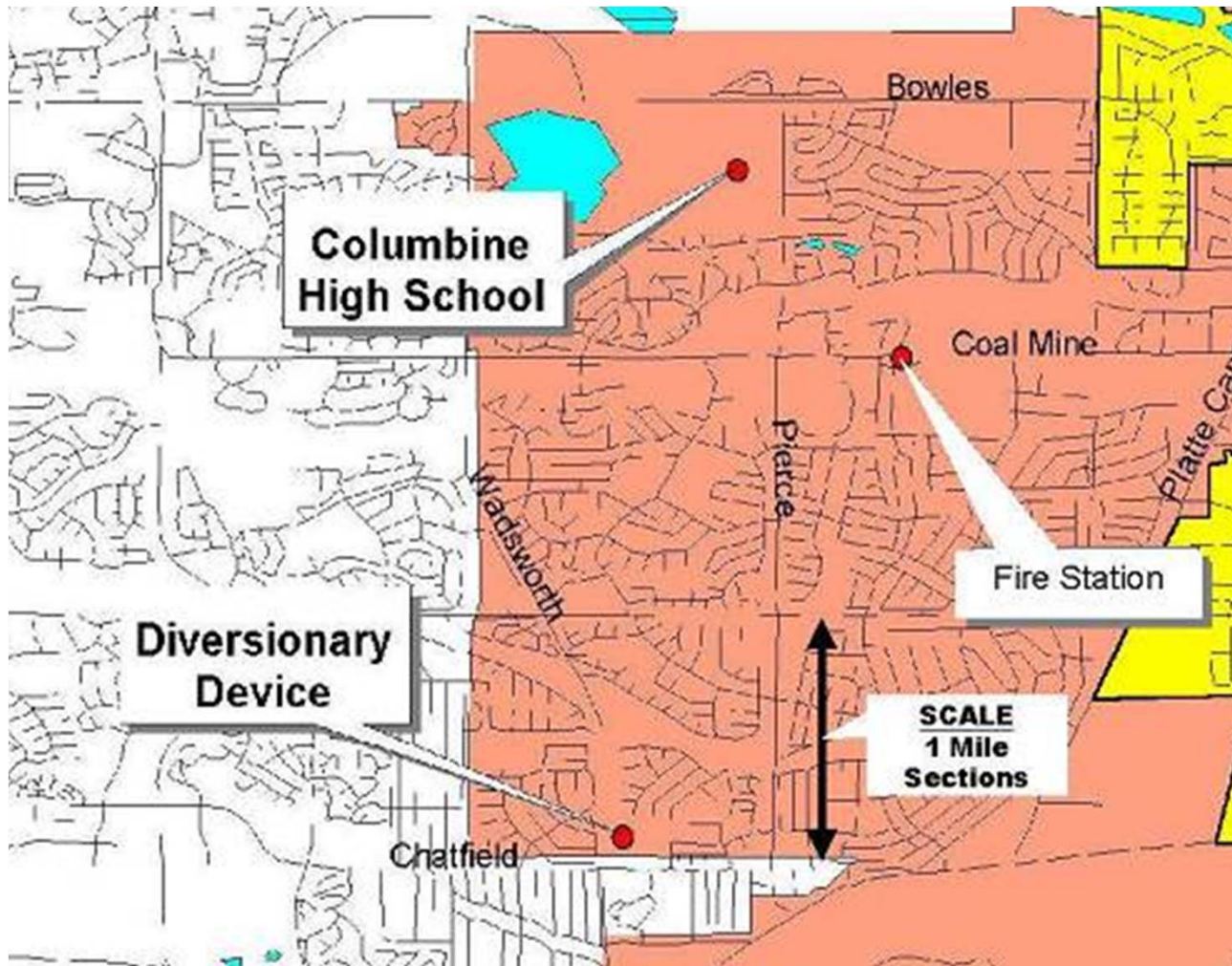
- April 20, 1999
- Littleton CO
- Suspects Harris and Klebold
- Killed 13
- Wounded 21 others
- They Fired 188 shots.
- Both suspects commit suicide







# *Diversiónary Device*





# Columbine High School



- With instructions from the Internet, they built **99 improvised explosive devices** of various designs and sizes. Placing duffel bags filled with bombs in the schools cafeteria.
- Two propane bombs in cafeteria would have killed 600+ if they worked.
- The pair hoped that after setting off bombs in the cafeteria at the busiest time of day, killing many hundreds of students, they would use their guns to shoot survivors as they fled from the school. Then, as police cars, ambulances, fire trucks, and reporters came to the school, bombs set in the boys' cars would go off, killing the emergency personnel, media, and law enforcement officers; this original plan failed when their main explosives did not detonate



# ***Columbine High School Littleton CO***



**Within the span of 16 minutes, the gunman killed 13 people and wounded 21 others. A savage act of domestic terrorism, their crime is the deadliest school shooting in the history of the United States”**

**~ Sheriff John P. Stone  
Jefferson Co. Colorado**



# *Columbine High School Littleton CO*



**KLEBOLD**



**HARRIS**

Dylan Bennet Klebold  
Born September 11, 1981  
\_ Lakewood, Colorado  
Died April 20, 1999 (aged 17)  
\_ Columbine, Colorado  
Status Deceased (suicide)

Eric David Harris  
Born April 9, 1981  
\_ Wichita, Kansas  
Died April 20, 1999 (aged 18)  
\_ Columbine, Colorado  
Status Deceased (suicide)



# School Violence Landscape

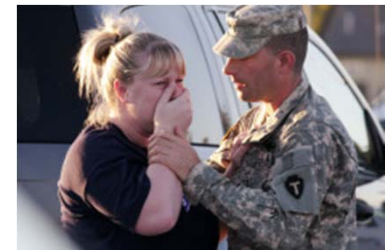




# Fort Hood



- Fort Hood shooting of November 5, 2009, the gunman, [Nidal Hasan](#), a [U.S. Army Major](#) and [psychiatrist](#) opened fire in the Soldier Readiness Center—killing 13 people and wounding 31 others. The suspected gunman, was shot and incapacitated by DOD civilian police officers.
- This is the worst mass shooting at a military base in the United States History.





# *Response Priorities*



- Locate, Contain and Stop the Shooter
- Treat and Evacuate the Injured
- Establish Perimeter
- Safety Sweep
- Complete Evacuation
- Process the Crime Scene



# *Active Shooter Priority Change*



## Normal LE priorities

1. Officer safety
2. Protect Hostage/Public
3. Perpetrator apprehension
4. Perpetrator safety

## Active shooter LE priorities

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





# *Active Shooter Response*



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The Active Shooter Response for NSF / LE changed after the Columbine tragedy

- Prior to Columbine, NSF were trained to post perimeter and call SWAT/SRT.
- After Columbine: Initial responders must immediately move in and neutralize the threat.



# *What's different about it?*



- Danger is immediate
- Cannot wait for SRT/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



# *Intervention*



- If a barricade situation, use the 4Cs
  - Contain, Control, Communicate, Call Response Forces.
- If a dynamic, active shooter situation
  - Put together an entry-contact team made up of a minimum of two patrol officers and move to the shooter.
  - If enough personnel are available, maintain a perimeter and incident commander outside the facility



# Active Shooter Concept



- Imperative:
  - Stop the violence NOW
- Theory of Operation:
  - Enter structure with contact team (if available)
  - Move quickly to sounds/source of violence
    - There may be no sounds to guide you
  - Search only when source of violence unknown
  - Move past victims and threats (IEDs, etc.)
  - Engage and neutralize perpetrators



# *Initial Response*



## Keep the siren on

- Advantage – Draws attention to responding officers and off the victim.
- Disadvantages – No longer an element of surprise.





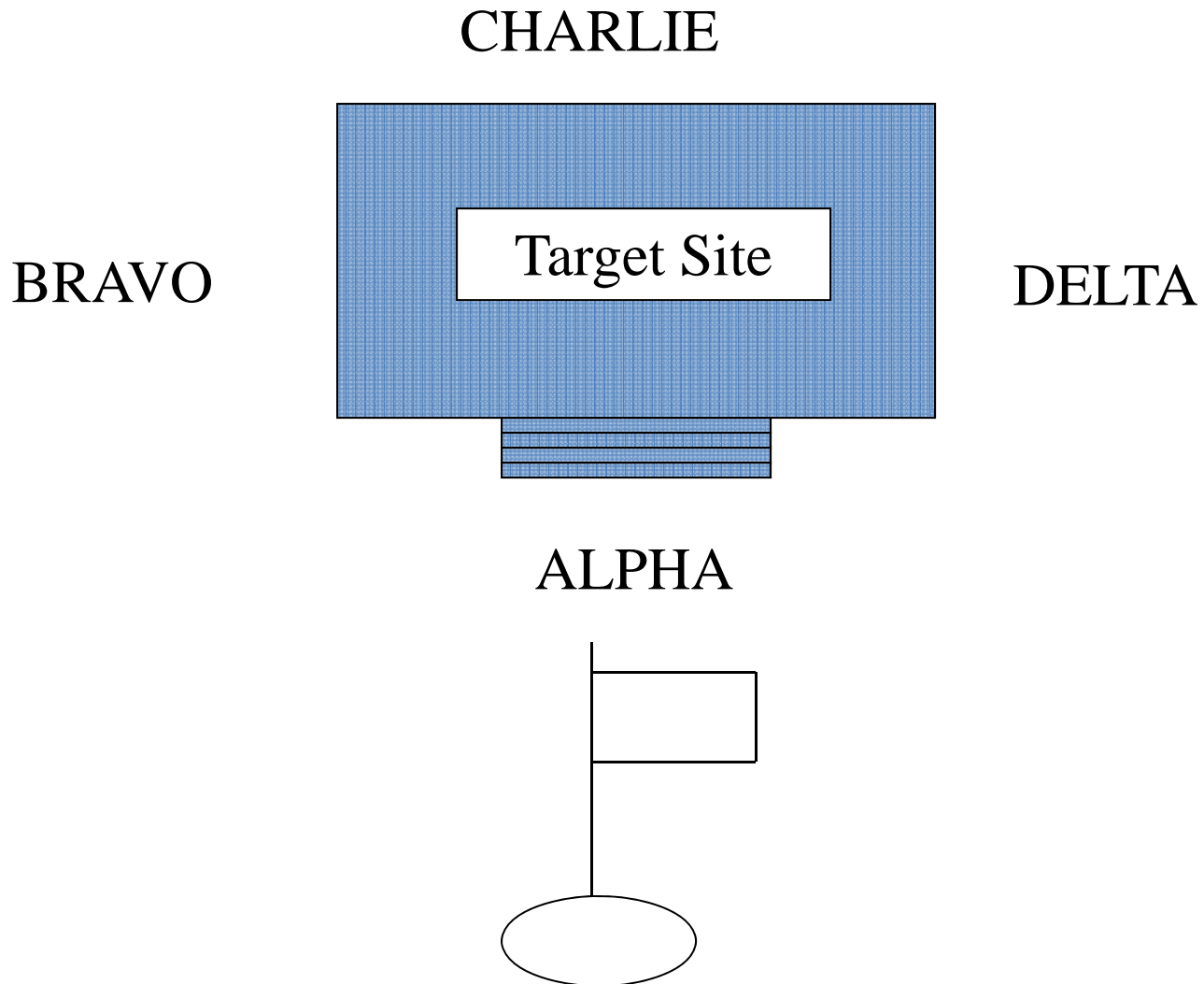
## *Initial Response (Cont)*



- Obtain all pertinent information/intelligence from dispatch
- Request all available resources for assistance, and determine the ETA of other responding units
- Organize a “Contact Team” if possible
- Neutralize the Threat as soon as possible
- Broadcast a safe approach route
- Determine the “Hot” side
- Utilize Side Designation- “Alpha-Numeric”

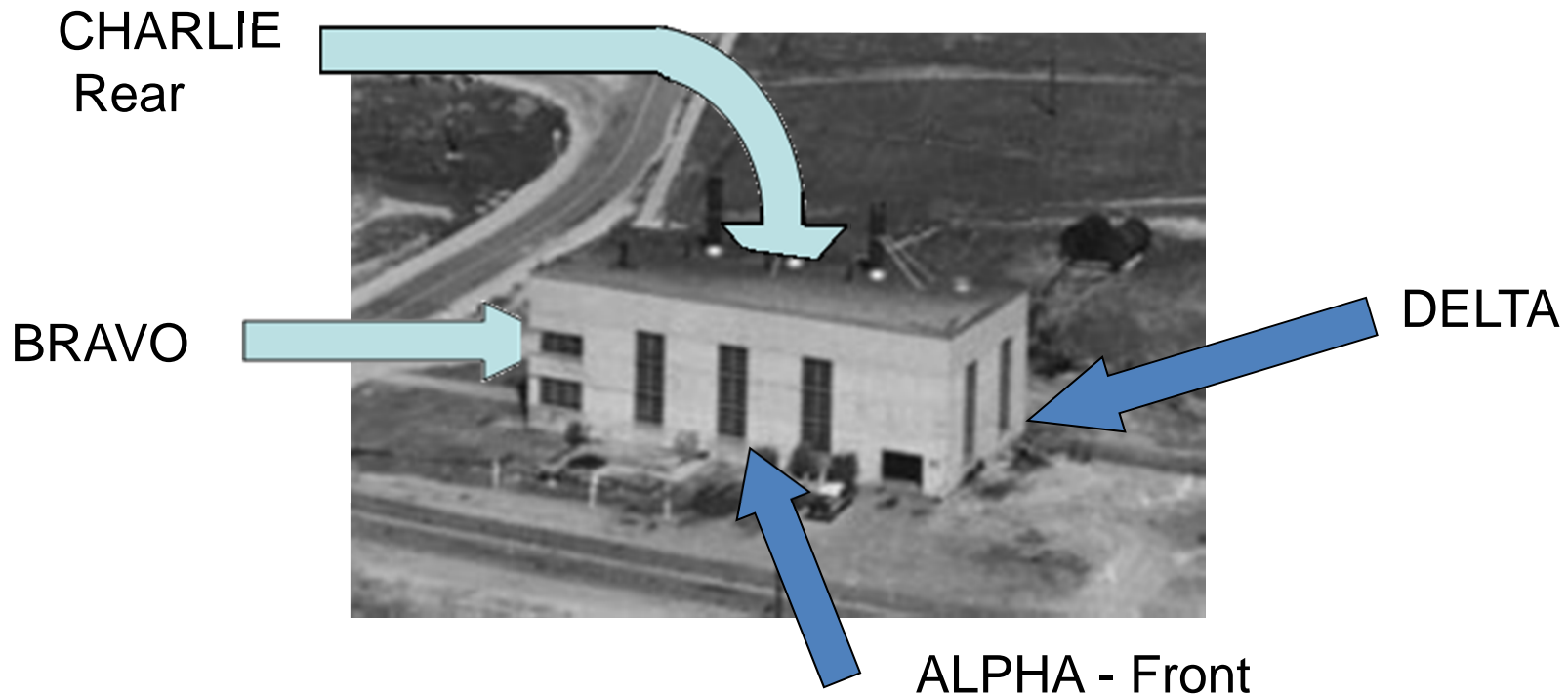


# Building - Sides Designation





# Building - Sides Designation



Sides - Clockwise - starting with front as ALPHA Side





# On Scene



- Position your patrol vehicle to act as cover with the best possible field of view.
- Determine where you can stop, get out, check gear and orient yourself without coming under fire
- Coordinate with other units
- Determine whether active shooter response still needed

~ Kimveer Gill killed one and injured 19 others at a college campus in Montreal (2006)





# Scene Assessment



- Cover/Concealment – obstacles
- Doors
- Windows
- Walls
- Hazards
- Determine point of entry for Contact Team

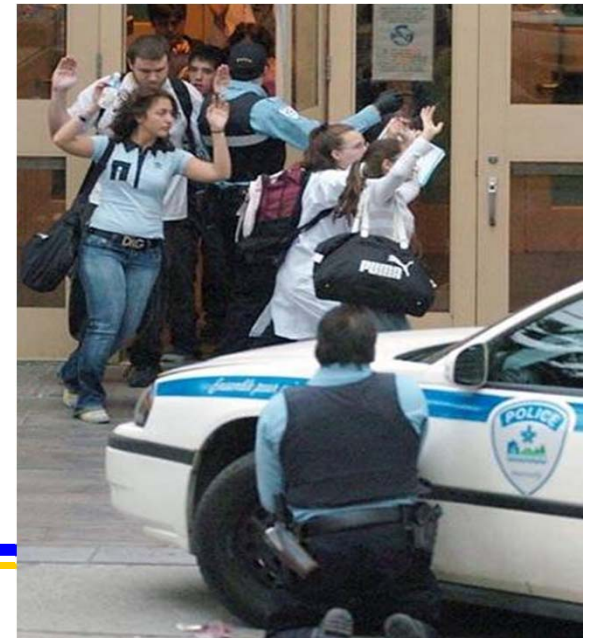




# ***Movement Towards Entry***



- Notify the dispatcher
- Avoid confusing language and navigational terms
- Accessible entry points, obstacles and barriers, and available resources
- Cover vs Concealment
- Bounding over watch





# First Officer On-Scene



- It is important for Law Enforcement personnel to survive the encounter, to end a massacre, rather than become additional victims.
- While a multiple officer response is preferred for this type of critical incident, the nature and timing may require a SINGLE officer or PAIR of officers to respond quickly and effectively in order to reduce loss of life.
- All attempts to secure minimum of 2 initial responders should be made.





# First Officer On-Scene (Cont)



- NOTE: If you're by yourself and the suspect is shooting people within your range of view or hearing, it's time to engage him/her/them... There's no time to wait and hopefully form a team. You're not an SRT, but you may have to act like one, under these conditions. Remember, this is your job. It is your duty-bound obligation to do the best you can with what you have to work with. Not doing anything while you wait for back-up is not an option in an active shooter attack.



## ***First Officer On-Scene (Cont)***



- The first responding police officer to an active shooter event must recognize the real dangers inherent in armed or physical confrontations.
- Dispatch may have provided some basic information of the situation as the officer approaches, but that information may not be entirely accurate. Information that can be gleaned quickly from eyewitnesses may provide valuable insights.



# *Ideal Situation*



- First officer on scene will establish the contact team if possible.
  - Has most information
  - Directs other responding units
- Entry team: 2 - 4 officers
  - Larger buildings have multiple teams enter different entrances
- Rescue team: 4 later-responding officers
- Incident commander outside
  - Everyone can communicate with each other



# Contact Team



- Use Intel to move directly to threat
  - Bypass other rooms and areas
- If suspects' exact position is unknown:
  - Slow down and do quick entries/searches as you move
  - Gather Intel from persons still in facility
  - Challenge or engage the suspect when encountered.





# *Incident Commander*



## Responsibilities.

- Collect information.
- Direct responding units to a staging area.
- Assemble an entry-contact team and move to the shooter.
- Remain outside the location to direct additional responding units.
- Transition command to a supervisor



# Police Duties and Responsibilities (Cont)



- Inner Perimeter
  - Small enough to limit mobility of suspects
  - Large enough to protect responding units



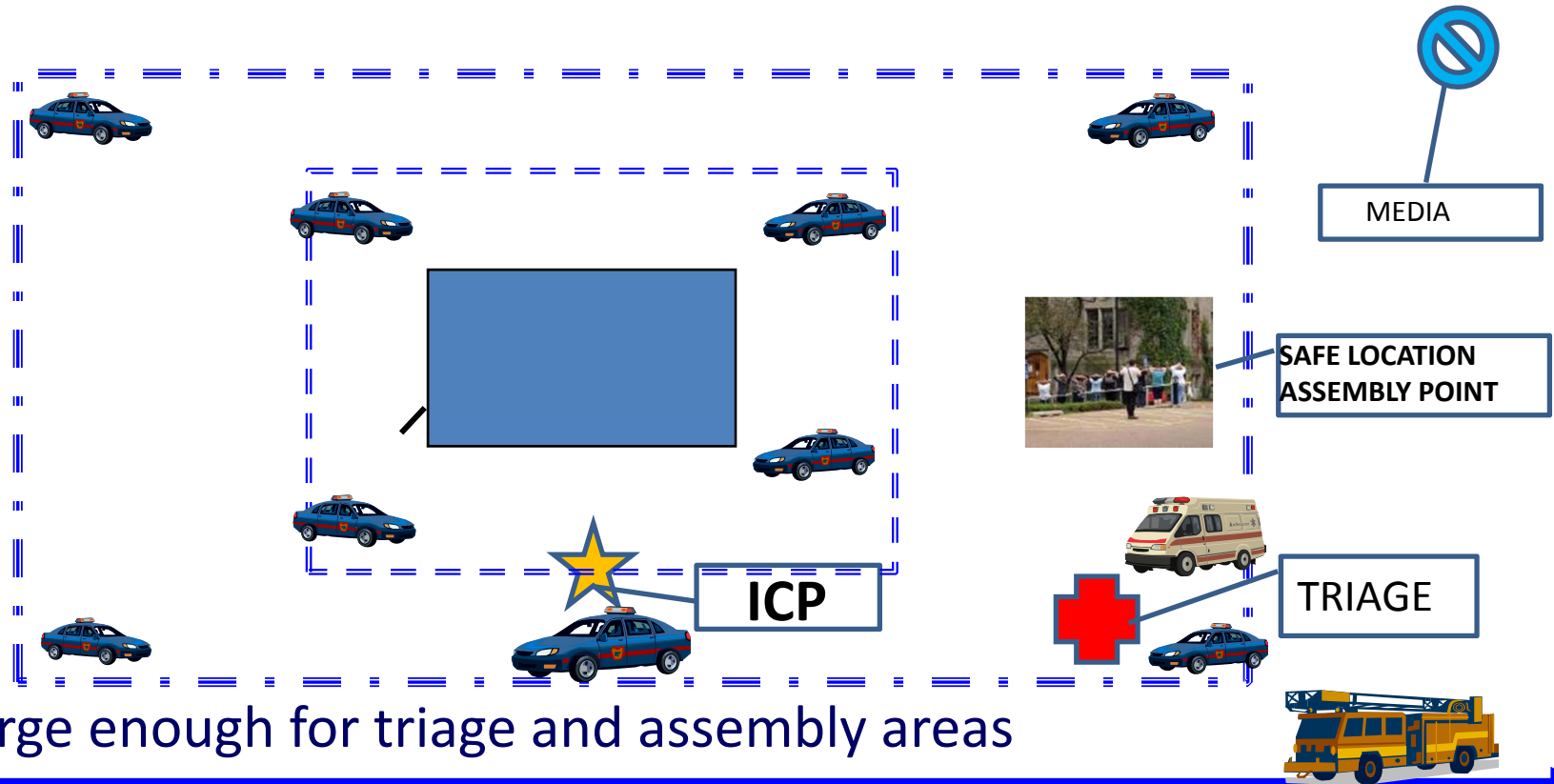


# Police Duties and Responsibilities

## Cont



- Outer Perimeter
  - Large enough to protect additional responding units, medical, red cross and fire support.



- Large enough for triage and assembly areas



# Perimeter Security



- Shrink the perimeter
- Provide a safe area for the evacuation of injured
- Cut off suspect escape routes
- Allow for the evacuation of a portion of the building/site





# Review



- Terms
- Case studies
- Initial response and deployment
- Contact team
- Incident Commander
- Perimeter Security



# *No Contact*



- Use Contact Teams for a static search.
- Evacuate injured with Rescue Teams
- Shrink perimeter around area of last sighting
- If gunfire starts, direct Contact Teams to the location



# Contact with Suspect - Actions



- Unreliable/conflicting information regarding numbers and descriptions of suspects, etc
- When a suspect is encountered, he must immediately surrender and become compliant or be stopped with force IAW DOD 5210.56
- Position suspect for maximum security of team
  - Prone position – facing away
  - Be aware of possibility of other suspects



# ***Contact with Suspect - Actions***



- Suspect handcuffed by 2 officer team
  - Cover Officer
  - Search Officer
- Suspect may be unconscious or apparently dead – ALWAYS handcuff and search
- Suspect may have IED on person
- Barricaded suspect





# *Downed/Injured Persons*



- Gather intel from injured persons – but, bypass all wounded until the threat has been eliminated
- The Search and Rescue Team will assist the injured once the area is relatively safe
- Mentally ready



# *Search and Rescue Team*



- This team will be formed as soon as possible once the entry team is inside the structure
- Mission is to conduct a detailed search of the facility and evacuate the injured
- Medically qualified NSF officer (EMT/Corpsman) should be placed with this team if possible
- Coordinate actions with the Contact/Entry Team Leader and other responding personnel.



# *Rescue Teams*



- This will be the secondary group of officers to enter a location and MAY be able to accomplish the following:
- Usher innocent people from the location.
- Locate victims.
- Communicate mass casualty locations.
- Communicate immediate medical needs.
- Prioritize casualties. TRIAGE – to sort
- Move wounded persons to a safe area.



# *Search and Rescue Team*



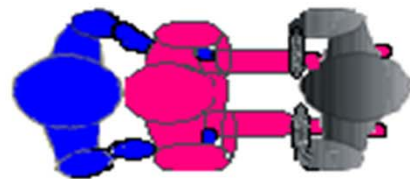
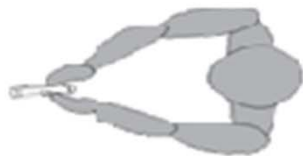
- Follows entry team
  - Removes victims (including officers)
  - Must be capable of becoming contact team if perpetrators encountered
- Fire/EMS personnel rescue team issues
  - Non-sworn
  - No tactical skills
  - No training
  - Not armed
  - Not likely to enter an un-secured area anyway



# *Rescue Team Mission*



Locate and move personnel from within the danger areas of an “ACTIVE THREAT”





# *Victim Extraction*



- The Point Cover Officer will cover in front of the victim and extend his coverage from right to left.
- Rear Cover will cover the rear of the victim and extend cover from right to left.
- Right and Left Cover officers will attempt to extract the victim by having one officer secure the legs (locking victim's legs under officer's arms), while the other officer approaches the head of victim and pulls victim into a sitting position with arms folded across the victim's chest. The officer reaches through the folded arms and grasps victim's forearms and lifts.



# *Evacuations*



- Controlled removal of innocent when suspects are contained or eliminated.
- Large manpower drain
- Orderly evacuation will minimize trauma
- Establish safe areas prior to evacuation



# Evacuations



- Not like a fire drill
  - Move to a safe distance behind cover

- Types of evacuations
  - Escorted
  - Unescorted



- Trapped persons may have to remain in a secured room





# *Tools for Searching*



## Low Light:

- Mini flashlight vs full-size flashlight
- Ensure it works
- No need to keep on
- Do not worry about position
- Consider backlight
- Keep light away from body



# *Other Considerations*



- Attics
- Drop spaces
- Crawl spaces



# Lessons Learned



- Apply the plus-one rule
- Secondary devices
- Parents and other loved ones
- Armed volunteers may show up





# Lessons Learned



- Radios
- Weather
- Equipment failures
- Who is in charge
- Under-reaction and over-reaction





# *Critical Incident Stress*



- May experience strong emotional or physical reactions
- Symptoms may last days, weeks, months...
- Critical Incident Debriefing Teams



***Questions?***

