



ACTIVE SHOOTER INCIDENT RESPONSE

Directive 13 - 100

Date of Issue: July 2013 Amends/Cancel: G.O. 11-02

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Directive is to establish guidelines for the rapid response to an active shooter incident.

II. POLICY

- A. It is policy of the DGS-MCP to empower initial responding officers with the authority and responsibility to take immediate action, consistent with their training and experience, to contain and, if necessary, to neutralize active shooters. It is the goal of the DGS-MCP to intervene in active shooter situations to neutralize the threat by preventing access to potential victims and to rescue injured persons and potential victims. Officers responding to an active shooter incident will accomplish this goal by immediately using any legal means at their disposal to make contact with the active shooter and stop the shooter as soon as possible. This may include arrest, containment, or use of deadly force.
- B. The prioritization of activities, in their order of importance is:
1. Stop the active shooter;
 2. Rescue the victims;
 3. Provide medical assistance; and
 4. Preserve the crime scene.

NOTE: While it is important to provide medical treatment to the wounded, it is our duty to first protect all innocent life by stopping the actions of the active shooter.

III. INTRODUCTION

- A. Active Shooter Incidents require that patrol personnel act immediately and deploy rapidly prior to the arrival of a tactical response team (SWAT). In these instances, often involving on-going incidents of "shots fired" or "downed officer/citizen rescue," delayed deployment can have catastrophic consequences and may demand that law enforcement personnel take immediate and rapid action to contain, neutralize and/or prevent the escape of an armed and dangerous person(s).
- B. Over the past several years, our nation has experienced a growing trend of mass violence committed by individuals. These episodes, described as "active shooter" incidents, are unique in that the suspect or suspects' behavior differs from that typically associated with other violent attacks. These suspect(s) generally begin to shoot at, injure, and kill numbers of people without warning.

- C. Once law enforcement recognizes that the intentions of these individuals, is not to take hostages but to kill or seriously injure occupants, containment and isolation are no longer adequate responses. In such a scenario, law enforcement's first responders cannot take a passive stance but must initiate a counter-offensive and aggressively confront the suspect or suspects.
- D. The tactical response by a first responder to an active shooter represents a shift in patrol response tactics, equipment needs, and command protocol. These situations require the initial police responders arriving on the scene to have the authority and capability to take action without waiting for command staff to provide over-sight or for the arrival of tactical response teams/hostage negotiators.

IV. DEFINITIONS

- A. **Active Shooter:** One or more subjects who are participating in an ongoing, random or systematic shooting spree, demonstrating their intent to continuously harm others. Their overriding objective appears to be that of mass injury or murder, rather than other criminal conduct, such as robbery, hostage taking, etc.
- B. **Contact Team(s):** The contact team's primary function is to initiate immediate pursuit and confrontation with the active shooter(s). Their mission is to make contact as soon as possible and to stop the active shooter by arrest, containment, or use of deadly force. The first arriving Officers (up to five) shall form a contact team.
- C. **Rescue Team(s):** The rescue team's primary function is to locate and remove victims from within the facility to a safe location or directing victims to a safe passage from the facility. Rescue team members should remember that uninjured victims may nonetheless be in shock, or paralyzed with fear, and may not respond to regular verbal commands. Rescue team members are to remain constantly vigilant as the rapidly changing dynamics of the incident may put them in contact with the suspect and that they too are subject to 360-degree vulnerability

V. PROCEDURES

A. Characteristics of an Active Shooter

The following is a list of characteristics commonly associated with active shooter suspects. This list is not comprehensive. Each shooter situation is unique.

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 assault victims from a distance like a sniper or may engage multiple targets while remaining mobile.

5. Tactics such as containment and negotiation, normally associated with standoff incidents may not be adequate in active shooter incidents. 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 circumstances in which it is used constitutes deadly physical force.
7. Active shooters may have planned and rehearsed attack and 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 discriminate 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 a 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 active shooter incident or an active shooter may go “inactive” by going to a barricaded status without access to victims.

B. Response Procedures

1. These incidents are sufficiently unique in that their effective handling cannot be totally reduced to standardized and generic procedures. These procedures are not meant to limit conventional police tactics appropriate to a crisis situation. The significant factors regarding these tactics are that they represent a means of intervention available to officers in order to prevent injury/death to innocent persons while complying with DGS-MCP Rules and Regulations on the use of force. Additionally, under these guidelines, a first responder officer arriving at the scene of an active shooter incident is authorized to intervene prior to the arrival of command personnel and specialized units.

A. Assume Tactical Responsibility

One of the first arriving officers must take charge of the active shooter incident. Assumption of incident scene responsibility may be based on rank, expertise, or seniority. However, it must be made immediately clear to other officers and dispatch. An officer of superior rank who is on scene and fully briefed may ultimately assume scene command. The dispatchers and officers in the field must be advised of any change in the incident command.

B. Situational Analysis

The officer taking charge must, based on all information available, make a situational analysis. The analysis will be continuous, taking into account new information from dispatch and

observations from officers, victims and citizens. The analysis must lead to a decision as to whether the situation is an active shooter incident, whether an opportunity exists for immediate intervention, and how responding resources should be deployed at the scene.

C. Incident Command

Incident Command shall be implemented in accordance with ICS Training.

1. No action will be taken that is unplanned or without controls.
2. The first officer on the scene who is not part of a contact or rescue team will assume the role of incident commander; initiate situational analysis to determine the best deployment tactics of responding resources, and establish a command post site.
3. The officer will remain as incident commander until a higher-ranking officer assumes the role of incident commander. At least one person possessing all available information on tactical plans and actions taken will remain at the command post to brief arriving personnel.
4. The Incident Commander shall:
 - (a) Establish Communications and Control – Identify separate channels according to task or assignment.
 - (b) Identify Inner Perimeter “Hot Zone” and restrict access.
 - (c) Establish Outer Perimeter
 - (d) Establish Command Post
 - (e) Establish Staging Areas:
 - (f) Law Enforcement
 - (g) Fire Rescue/EMS and “Triage Center”
 - (h) Media – Contact Office of Media Communications
 - (i) Family Members
 - (j) Medical Examiner
 - (k) Form additional Contact/Rescue teams, as necessary;
 - (l) Post additional responding personnel to protect the crime scene;
 - (m) Call for appropriate follow-up investigative services (detectives, crime lab, etc.) and any other appropriate resources to bring the incident to a conclusion.
 - (n) Ensure that the scene integrity is protected for crime scene processing
 - (o) Start a chronological listing (Time Line) of the incident.

5. Command personnel en route to the incident will monitor the radio to gain information, but will not obstruct on-going intervention.
6. Command personnel will be on scene and fully briefed before assuming incident command.

D. Contact Team

1. The next four officers to arrive on the scene will form a Contact Team and follow audio and visual clues and/or available intelligence to find the active shooter(s) and utilize all lawful necessary force to end the event or contain the shooter(s). Obtain as much information as possibly and relay this information to the command post and dispatch. This information should include but not be limited to, number of shooter(s), possible location, type of weapons, description of shooter(s), etc.
2. The Contact Team's primary responsibility is to confront the active shooter. Stopping the active shooter by arrest, containment or use of force including deadly force is their sole responsibility. They will focus on no other activity until their mission is accomplished.
3. Once the active shooter has been stopped, the Contact Team must be aware of the possibility of additional assailants. If more shooting, audio/visual cues or intelligence information leads to the conclusion that a second, third or more active shooters are present, the Contact Team will continue their mission until all active shooters are stopped. In any event, the Contact Team will continue their search until the entire building(s) have been cleared and they have stopped all active shooters. If the Contact Team is successful in containing the active shooter(s) and no innocent victims are in imminent danger, procedures for a hostage/barricade incident will be initiated.
4. Late responding officers are not to search for an active shooter unless it is learned that the Contact Team has been rendered incapable of continuing their mission. In instances when the first Contact Team has been rendered ineffective, another Contact Team shall be formed immediately to continue their mission. If an additional Contact Team is formed, coordination between Contact Teams is vital.
5. Other responding officers shall form a perimeter to stop escape of an active shooter. Active shooters emerging from cover and concealment are to be stopped by the perimeter officer using all lawful and necessary force. It should be anticipated that innocent persons will be fleeing the active shooter. Fleeing persons are to be searched and directed to a place of safety designated by the Incident Commander.
6. The Contact Team shall maintain radio communications providing status information and observations.
7. If the suspect is arrested or incapacitated, standard operating procedures will be followed regarding the treatment of the suspect(s), investigation of the incident, and scene/evidence preservation.
8. If a suspected explosive device is encountered, the Contact Team will make the determination whether to evacuate or proceed to the threat.
9. Officers should consider making entry at a location other than the main entrance, if

possible, as this is the place where a suspect might logically set up barricades, explosives, or an ambush.

10. During the course of the event, all personnel are to restrict their use of the radio for emergency traffic only and the incident commander shall consider the use of tactical radio channels.
11. If time permits, witnesses and escaped hostages should be debriefed to determine the number of suspects, weapons used, booby traps and the last known suspect location. The number of hostages, their locations, injuries and/or deaths should also be obtained.

E. STATE/Local Team (Tactical Team) Deployment

When State or local S.W.A.T./A.S.E.T. is prepared to deploy, the initial responding officers may be relieved by these specialized units or they may be redeployed. It is the responsibility of the Incident Commander to notify and account for all deployed personnel.

F. Rescue/Recovery

1. Once all active shooter have been stopped, the focus shifts to evacuations of all living persons from the hostile environment. The area will continue to be viewed as hostile even though no more hostile action is known to be taking place. It is possible that one or more active shooters have abandoned their efforts in hopes of escape or mingling with innocent civilians.
2. The Incident Commander at the scene shall call in all necessary resources to form Rescue Teams to search the hostile environment for wounded persons and innocent civilians in hiding. Depending upon the available resources, Rescue Teams will consist of two to four officers.
3. Wounded persons shall be removed from the hostile environment to a triage area of safety where they will receive first aid. First Aid of the wounded civilians shall be the responsibility of the Rescue Team member unless relieved by paramedics/medical personnel at the triage area.
4. The Incident Commander may admit paramedics/medical personnel into the hostile environment if in the opinion of a Rescue Team member the wounded person cannot be safely evacuated. In this case a Rescue Team member will accompany the paramedic/medical personnel into the hostile area.
5. Uninjured persons in the hostile environment shall be searched for weapons by Rescue Team members prior to being evacuated to a safe area designated by the Incident Commander. One Rescue Team member is to serve as a cover officer while another team member(s) are searching for weapons.
6. Rescue Team members shall continue to search the hostile environment until all living persons have been evacuated.
7. Only the Incident Commander at the scene shall declare a hostile environment safe. This will normally be declared after a final search by the State or local S.W.A.T./ A.S.E.T. The hostile environment now becomes a crime scene.

G. News Media

1. Unless otherwise authorized by the Secretary of DGS, Chief of Police or the DGS Public Information Officer, the DGS-MCP will not issue any press releases or grant interviews with the media.
2. Access to the scene will be restricted to emergency personnel. The highest ranking on-scene member of the lead investigatory agency will make the decision to authorize access, as well as the degree of access allowed.

H. Tactical Flight Restrictions (TFR's)

1. Should an event occur (e.g., Active Shooter) whereby tactical operations are in progress and there is a real concern that the suspect(s) may possess the capabilities of observing said real-time operations on television, thereby putting at risk the safety of law enforcement personnel and/or innocent victims, or that such broadcast may impede/interfere with law enforcement operations at an on-going event, the DGS-MCP may pursue a TFR by contacting Maryland State Police.

I. Communications

1. Upon receipt of a call indicating the possibility of an active shooter incident, the Police Communications Operator (PCO) shall:
 - (a) Remain calm and coherent.
 - (b) Record the nature of the call, the address, and other information given by the caller including the caller's name, address, and location.
 - (c) Maintain communication with the caller until patrol units have arrived on the scene.
 - (d) Attempt to secure detailed information from the caller concerning the incident. This shall include, but is not limited to, the following:
 1. Name and description of the assailant(s)
 2. Exact location of the assailant(s)
 3. Number and types of weapon(s)
 4. Mental/physical state of the assailant(s), i.e. alcohol or drug use, mental illness, if possible.
 5. Possible motivation of the assailant(s)
2. Upon dispatch of a call involving an active shooter incident, the Police Communication Operator (PCO) shall:
 - (a) Remain calm and coherent.
 - (b) Dispatch the call to a primary unit, secondary units, the Detachment Commander. This shall be a Code Three response for all units.

- (c) Require all personnel that respond to the call to advise when they have arrived on the scene.
 - (d) Continue to advise responding units of all information received, as well as of any new developments in the situations.
 - (e) Clear the air for responding units.
3. During the course of the call involving an active shooter incident, the Police Communications Operator (PCO) shall:
- (a) Monitor and assist additional responding units by advising of a safe route to the command post or staging area.
 - (b) Once patrol units have verified that an active shooter situation exists, the PCO shall notify the Chief of Police or his designee, and allied agencies (i.e. Baltimore City PD, Annapolis City PD, Maryland State Police)
 - (c) Upon request of the on-scene commander, the PCO shall contact allied agencies to request State, S.W.A.T./ A.S.E.T. team response.
 - (d) Maintain open communication with all units involved in the incident and respond expeditiously to all requests.

J. After Action Activities

- 1. Personnel involved in the event will submit applicable written after-action reports delineating their assignments as well as detailed descriptions of their actions during the event.
- 2. The Incident Commander will conduct an after action review with all involved parties and prepare an After Action Report for inclusion with the Investigative file.
- 3. Within 30 calendar days after the incident, the Incident Commander will submit the Investigative File, through the chain of command, to the Chief of Police. The Investigative File will include copies of the Criminal Investigative Report, Use of Force Reports, Injury to Prisoner Detailed Reports, After Action Report, etc.
- 4. The Chief of Police will review, endorse and return the file through the chain of command to the Detachment Commander for local retention.

MARYLAND CAPITOL POLICE

Community Response Checklist

~ Active Shooter Incident ~

Secure immediate area:

- Lock and barricade doors
- Turn off lights
- Close blinds
- Block windows
- Turn off radios and office equipment
- Keep occupants calm quiet and out of site
- Keep yourself out of sight and take adequate cover/protection, i.e. concrete walls, thick desks, filing cabinets (cover may protect you from bullets)
- Silence cell phones
- Place signs in exterior windows to identify location of injured persons

Un-Securing an area:

- Consider risks before un-securing rooms
- Remember, the shooter will not stop until they are engaged by an outside force
- Attempts to rescue people should only be attempted if it can be accomplished without further endangering the persons inside a secured area.
- Consider the safety of masses vs-the safety of a few
- If doubt exists for the safety of individuals inside the room, the area should remain secured

Contacting Authorities:

- Use Emergency 911
- Maryland Capitol Police
Annapolis 410-260-2911
Baltimore 410-767-2911

Be aware that the 911 system will likely be overwhelmed. Program the MCP contact numbers in your cell phone for emergency use.

What to report:

- Your specific location - building name and office/room number
- Number of people at your specific location
- Injuries - number injured, types of injuries
- Assilant(s) - location, number of suspects, race/gender, clothing description, physical features, types of weapons (long gun or hand gun), backpack, shooters identity if known, separate explosions from gunfire, etc.

Police Response:

- Objective is to immediately engage assailant(s)
- Evacuate victims
- Facilitate follow up medical care, interviews, counseling
- Investigation

