



GENERAL POLICE ORDER CLEVELAND DIVISION OF POLICE



EFFECTIVE DATE: October 18, 2011	REVISED DATE:	NO. PAGES: 1 of 8	NUMBER: 3.3.01
SUBJECT: ACTIVE SHOOTER RESPONSE			
ASSOCIATED MANUAL:		RELATED ORDERS:	
CHIEF OF POLICE: <i>Michael McGrath, Chief</i>			

PURPOSE: To empower the patrol officer or first responder to confront an active shooter when any delayed response or a failure to act constitutes a greater risk than waiting for a specialized response. To establish a plan of action for first responders to follow when such an active shooter event occurs.

POLICY: In order to prevent death or serious harm to innocent persons, officers responding to an active shooter incident shall have the authority to and shall attempt to make immediate contact with and stop the active shooter. Secondly, responding officers shall deny the active shooter access to additional victims and shall rescue injured/potential victims. Officers shall rely on their Rapid Action Immediate Deployment (RAID) training to quickly and efficiently mount an immediate response prior to the availability of a tactical unit. In active situations, delayed response can result in additional loss of life or serious physical harm.

This policy shall not be construed to mandate that responding officers place themselves in harm's way in a manner that is beyond what is reasonably and objectively expected based upon the officers' skill, training, experience, equipment, and responding environment. RAID deployment is not a substitute for a specialized response by officers specifically trained for such encounters.

DEFINITIONS:

Active Shooter: The suspect's activity and use of a firearm (or any other deadly instrument, device, machine, dangerous ordnance, or deadly hazard) is causing or attempting to cause immediate death and/or serious physical harm in a well populated area (target rich environment), such as a school, church, business, or any other public place. The activity is continuing and there is an immediate and ongoing threat of death or serious

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physical harm to potential victims. Escape from a law enforcement response is not a priority of the active shooter. Active shooters may have planned diversionary events to permit themselves more time to accomplish their primary task. Active shooters may have deployed Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) or other “booby traps” to impede a law enforcement response or to magnify the harm intended. The active shooter may also employ an “ambush” to maximize harm to emergency responders. The active shooter may also be just one member of a team of assailants. Active shooters may be wearing body armor. Active shooters will generally be very familiar with the physical layout and other details of the event environment.

Dynamic Situation: The situation is evolving very rapidly along with the suspect’s action of shooting and moving.

Static Situation: The situation is not evolving or in motion. The suspect’s actions have ceased or appear to be contained, such as when the suspect has barricaded him/herself in a room and the suspect’s deadly actions have been temporarily suspended.

PROCEDURES:

I. Rapid Action Immediate Deployment (RAID) Considerations

A. The aggressive and deadly behavior is active.

1. The event is ongoing and the suspect(s) is actively engaged in causing death or serious physical harm by way of a firearm, edged weapon, or any other deadly instrument, device, machine, dangerous ordnance, or deadly hazard.
2. The incident location potentially contains multiple suspected victims:
 - a. Schools and day care facilities
 - b. Crowded public parks/playgrounds/recreation areas
 - c. Sporting events/other public venues
 - d. Hospitals
 - e. Shopping malls/retail stores
 - f. Places of business/employment

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B. Citizen/Officer Rescue

1. A citizen or police officer is gravely wounded and a delayed rescue may prove fatal.
2. The suspect may, or may not, be actively involved in an assault, however, an assault is imminent and immediate rescue is critical.
3. Due to the location of the victim(s), an immediate rescue may be necessary to prevent death or great bodily harm.

II. First Responders

The first officers on the scene are likely to be uniformed patrol officers assigned to the Patrol Section but may also be the nearest officer from any unit or an off-duty police officer in civilian clothing who is already on scene (refer to GPO 3.4.23 for plains clothes/off-duty officer safety protocols). The first responding officers' actions are critical to the event's outcome. An initial responder is in charge of the scene as the ad-hoc incident commander, until relieved by a superior/command officer. Assumption of incident command may be based on rank, expertise, or experience. The name, rank, and assignment of the incident commander shall be made immediately clear through all channels of incident communication.

A. Assess the Situation

1. Establish an Incident Command. The senior or most experienced officer on the scene shall accept this responsibility until a superior officer arrives.
2. Make a rapid assessment and request appropriate resources.
 - a. Additional officers
 - b. Additional weaponry/equipment
 - c. Emergency medical personnel
 - d. SWAT/Field Forces
 - e. Division of Fire

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- f. Bomb Squad
 - g. Mutual Aid
3. Determine if immediate action and rapid deployment is required.
- B. Communications
- 1. The incident commander shall transition to the appropriate tactical channel as the event progresses.
 - 2. Important information must be made available to responding units.
 - a. Number of suspect(s)
 - b. Physical and clothing description of suspect(s)
 - c. Description of suspect weapon(s)
 - d. Last known location or movement of suspect(s)
 - e. Special information about the incident location
 - 3. On-scene officers shall communicate the safest approach to the event based on information available.
 - 4. On-scene officers shall establish an Incident Command Post location, even if only temporary.
 - 5. While establishing perimeters is not a primary duty of responding officers, perimeters shall be established as permitted as additional police resources arrive on scene to handle the task.
- C. Assemble Contact and Rescue Teams

In active situations, officers **may** enter alone or with fewer than the three back-up officers when perceived delay may result in additional loss of life.

- 1. Contact Team assignments (officers may constitute a smaller configured team as warranted by the need for an expeditious response.)

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- a. **Team Leader and Point-Person:** Assigns team member responsibilities, formulates and implements a plan, deploys a shotgun(slug)/patrol rifle, and provides cover for entrance and/or egress if necessary.
 - b. **Left Flank:** Provides cover on the left side of the formation, may rotate and acts as a rescue or contact officer.
 - c. **Right Flank:** Provides cover on right side of the formation, may rotate and acts as a rescue or contact officer.
 - d. **Rear Guard:** Deploys a shotgun(slug)/patrol rifle and provides cover for entrance and/or egress as required.
 - e. All the above positions shall also cover areas overhead and below, as threats can appear 360° x 360°.
2. Contact Team responsibilities
- a. Consider alternate entry points other than the main entry point where the active shooter may be anticipating and preparing to respond (attack/booby trap/IED) to a law enforcement entry.
 - b. Continue past victims (injured or not), but communicate back to the Rescue Team the location and condition of victims for later rescue.
 - c. Priority is to make rapid contact with the suspect and stop the violent behavior and to provide preliminary assessment of:
 - (a) Victim location and medical needs
 - (b) Suspicious packages and possible IEDs (location & type)
 - (c) Suspect description, location, and name
 - (d) Suspect weapon(s) and equipment (e.g. body armor)
 - d. Limit suspect movements and prevent escape
 - e. Communicate progress to Incident Command

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3. Rescue Team Responsibilities

- a. Priority is the rescue and recovery of victim(s) whether via evacuation or shelter-in-place strategies.
 - (a) Enter at the same point as the Contact Team, tracing the Contact Team's route if possible, and move toward victims.
 - (b) Extract victims to a safe area (or temporarily shelter in place).
 - (c) Debrief victims and relay event intelligence back to the Contact Team.
 - (d) Notify medical personnel and escort same to victims when necessary.
 - (e) Communicate any possible suspect sightings, contacts, or evidence of recent suspect movements.
 - (f) If a suspect is confronted, the Rescue Team becomes a Contact Team.
- b. Coordinate activities with the Contact Team leader and responding personnel.
- c. Emphasize custody and control.

D. Use of Deadly Force

When a suspect's behavior presents an immediate threat of death or great bodily harm to an innocent person, it may be necessary to use deadly force. The team leader has ultimate authority over team actions. Individual officers are authorized to use deadly force in accordance with Cleveland Division of Police policies on the Use of Force (GPO 2.1.01).

- ### E. Mental Preparation for Entry and What to Expect: Active shooter situations are sufficiently unique and rare so that officers can expect an environment for which they may never be completely prepared. This environment may include but is not be limited to:

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1. Constant or continual noise from screaming and crying people, alarms, intermittent gunfire, etc.
 2. Carnage, possibly even involving very young victims.
 3. Smoke or overpowering smells.
 4. Fire and sprinkler operation and possible standing water.
 5. Confusion and chaos with victims hiding, afraid, in shock, and not responding to commands from officers.
 6. Encountering IEDs.
 - a. Visually inspect (but refrain from touching) a suspected IED for active timer, lit fuse, trip wires, etc.
 - b. If an IED is located, initiate protocols for Bomb Squad/IED (reference GPO 3.2.19). This includes limitations on two-way electronic communications (this includes cell phones) and appropriate evacuation distances as required.
 - c. Identify locations of suspected IEDs and communicate this verbally when possible.
 - d. Do not touch or move suspected IEDs.
 - e. Move past the device when part of a Contact or Rescue Team.
- F. Arrival of SWAT before resolution of the event.
1. Coordinate and relinquish contact responsibility.
 2. Assist with containment of the suspect if needed.
 3. Assist with evacuation or relocation of victims.
 4. Act as a guide, “pathfinder”, for SWAT.
 - a. Direct to last known suspect location.

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- b. Communicate locations of suspected IEDs.
- c. Pass on all pertinent information regarding the situation.

G. Incident Command System (ICS)

As an overview, the expeditious establishment of the Incident Command System will enhance the probability of a swift resolution. Even upon the rapid resolution of an active shooter situation, there are still large-scale activities to be completed. A large crime scene needs to be preserved and processed as well as matters of identification and continuing aid to victims to consider. A large scale event can be expected to attract media attention and a large number of concerned citizens who may or may not have a relationship with any suspected victims. As such, there will be a need for a liaison for the media and the families of the victims or suspected victims. Designated areas will need to be established for command and control, staging of resources, staging for victims' families, staging for the treatment of the injured, and an area for media relations. Refer to past training and other resources for additional specifics on ICS protocols.