



TRAINING BULLETIN

Los Angeles Police Department

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IMMEDIATE ACTION / RAPID DEPLOYMENT TACTICS PART I

IMMEDIATE ACTION

Recently, there have been several high profile incidents where armed assailants, called **active shooters**, driven to commit acts of **“aggressive deadly behavior”** have assaulted schools, workplaces and other public venues. These situations require Immediate Action/Rapid Deployment (IARD) of initial responding law enforcement personnel prior to the arrival of a Special Weapons and Tactics team. In these cases, delayed deployment could have catastrophic consequences.

This Training Bulletin describes Immediate Action/Rapid Deployment tactics developed by the Department to prepare officers to handle these types of situations. These are effective methods for first responders to use, which will minimize the risk of personal injury when responding to an active shooting in progress.

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IDENTIFYING AN ACTIVE SHOOTER

An Active Shooter is *“An armed person who has used deadly physical force on other persons and aggressively continues to do so while having unrestricted access to additional victims.”*

Immediate Action/Rapid Deployment is *“The swift and immediate deployment of law enforcement resources to ongoing, life threatening situations where delayed deployment could otherwise result in death or serious bodily injury to innocent persons.”*

Characteristics of the Assailant

The following is a list of characteristics commonly associated with an assailant bent on aggressive deadly behavior. The list is compiled from descriptions of past assailants and is not meant to be all-inclusive.

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Assailant(s) may:

- Focus on assaulting persons with whom they have had prior contact. Their intention can be an expression of hatred or rage rather than the commission of a crime.
- Engage more than one target and may be intent on killing a number of people as quickly as possible.
- Go to locations where there are numerous potential victims, such as schools, theaters, concerts or shopping malls and/or may even strike at their victims from a distance; much like a sniper. Assailants may have some degree of familiarity with the building they choose to occupy.
- Continue their attack despite the arrival of emergency responders. Tactics such as containment and negotiation, normally associated with standoff incidents, may not be adequate in these types of events.
- Be better armed than the police and may make use of explosives, booby traps, body armor, and may even employ some type of diversion.
- Have planned an attack and be prepared for a sustained confrontation with the police. There have been occasions when these assailants have not attempted to hide their identity or conceal the commission of their attacks. Escape from the police is usually not a priority.
- Be suicidal, deciding to die in the course of their actions, either at the hands of others or by a self-inflicted wound.

Each crisis situation is unique and dynamic. The incident may go in and out of an "active" status. A suspect may go from an active shooter to a barricaded status with or without access to victims. The following are general response guidelines for ongoing deadly behavior incidents. Since these incidents contain many variables, effectively handling this type of situation cannot be totally reduced to specific procedures. These guidelines are not meant to limit conventional police tactics, which are appropriate to a dynamic situation.

FIRST RESPONDERS

Upon arrival at the scene where aggressive deadly behavior is ongoing, intelligence may be sparse and fragmented. Information may be obtained "on the run" from fleeing witnesses, spent casings on the ground, observing damage from fired rounds and any information reported by Communications Division. Broken windows are an excellent indicator for locating where violent acts have occurred or are occurring.

The following information should be obtained:

- Who is the assailant?
- What does the assailant look like?
- Where is the assailant?
- What weapon(s) does the assailant possess?
- What is known about the assailant's tactical abilities or specialized knowledge?
- What is the assailant's agenda or motive?

The first priority is to locate the assailant(s) and STOP the aggressive deadly behavior. First responders must:

- Form a Contact Team
- Notify Communications of the Contact Team number (Contact Team 1, 2, etc.)
- Communicate a quick overview of the incident while deploying
- Communicate team movement
- Proceed to contact the active shooter

After the initial Contact Team has been deployed, the next senior officer on scene must assume the role of Incident Commander to facilitate the information gathering and dissemination process.

COMMAND AND CONTROL

An active shooting incident is a complex situation requiring considerable assets for success. Large, unfamiliar locations such as schools, businesses, or other public venues pose serious problems from the command and control aspect. A successful outcome can only be accomplished if command and control is established early on, otherwise it may never be obtained. The Incident Commander (IC) must demonstrate clear, expedited and decisive leadership. Furthermore, active shooter incidents challenge the ability of the supervisor to rapidly gain control of an incident, unlike other tactical situations.

IC Primary Objectives

1. Stop the assailant
2. Rescue victims
3. Isolate and contain the incident

The Incident Commander should:

- Assess situation
- Establish communication with the initial Contact Team
- Coordinate and deploy responding resources
- Assemble additional Contact and Rescue Teams
- Broadcast a situation estimate (prioritize)
 - Location and number of suspects and type of weapons involved
 - Estimate size of the crowd and number of casualties and fatalities – if known
 - Additional assistance needed (fire, medical, etc.)
- Acquire a tactical frequency
- Establish Incident Command to coordinate resources and gather/disseminate information
 - Location of staging area and Incident Command Post
 - Ingress/egress routes for emergency vehicles
- Request additional resources
 - Urban Police Rifle (UPR)
 - Specialized resources (SWAT, Canine, Bomb Squad)
 - Fire Department and Paramedics
- Establish command and control

Deployment and Entry

The obvious problems of deployment into large structures are hindered by the fact that the suspect may not be readily identifiable. Additionally, there may be more than one suspect. The suspect has a distinct advantage when lying in wait while the Contact Team is at a disadvantage in searching for and apprehending this suspect. Depending upon the size of the venue (school, workplace, etc.), officers may encounter anywhere from 100 to 5,000 innocent victims who are potential targets and/or hostages, as well as 50 to 500 entrances and exits that have to be secured, watched or breached. To give themselves every possible advantage prior to an incident, officers should be familiar with the layout of possible targets, such as schools.

There will be numerous distractions during entry. These may include, but are not limited to carnage, explosive devices, activated fire sprinklers, noise from fire alarms, school bells and people screaming. Victims might be confused and frightened and may become physically aggressive and cling to rescuers, and those hiding may not respond to police directions. If the incident is at a school, teachers may lock the classroom door and have students sit on the floor until they receive police or school official instructions.

CONTACT TEAMS

Ideally, the Contact Team should consist of four officers. Although four officers are considered an adequate number to form a Contact Team, exigent circumstances may make it necessary to proceed with fewer than the desired amount (i.e., two officers and a supervisor, or LAUSD Officer, DARE Officer, etc.). Each circumstance is situation driven and requires the first officers on scene to rely upon prior training and good judgment when forming a Contact Team with less than four officers. Responding personnel must keep in mind that their primary role is to protect innocent persons at risk.

1. **Team Leader (TL)** - delegates team member responsibilities, formulates and directs plan. Maintains a **flank position during aggressive movement** and assumes the **rear guard position during systematic searching**.
2. **Assistant Team Leader (ATL)** - maintains communication with the incident commander and other units during deployment. Maintains a rear guard position during aggressive movement and may then become a room-clearer during systematic searching (TL will assume rear guard position).
3. **Designated Cover Officer (DCO)** - deploys a shotgun (slug ammunition, if qualified) or an Urban Police Rifle (UPR). Takes **point position** during search and provides cover forward of the team.
4. **General Purpose Officer (GPO)** - Provides cover to a **flank position** during movement and acts as a rescue or contact officer.

Contact Team Members should consider the following as priority tasks:

- ◆ Locate the assailant.
- ◆ Stop the assailant's deadly behavior.
- ◆ Limit the assailant's movement.
- ◆ Prevent the assailant's escape.
- ◆ Communicate team's progress to the IC and other officers.
- ◆ Notify ICP where victims are located so they can be rescued.
- ◆ Direct ambulatory victims to a safe area, and communicate that help is coming.

The primary mission of the Contact Team is to stop the assailant's deadly behavior and prevent escape. Communication is maintained with the Incident Commander and other officers to keep them informed of the Contact Team's progress. The secondary mission is to direct victims out of the crisis site through secured areas to the staging location. The goal is to save lives by containing the assailant and allowing the safe and orderly evacuation of victims.

When **entering** the location, the Contact Team will move in a **diamond formation** (see Figure 1). The diamond formation is fluid and can be changed to adapt to the crisis-site environment. The designated cover officer (point officer) takes a position in front of the diamond (point). This officer generally carries a shotgun, UPR, or slug shotgun. During slow and deliberate searching, the Team Leader (**TL**) will act as rear guard to assist in monitoring the room being searched and the corridor at the same time. If there is activity that drives the team forward, such as gun shots, the Team Leader maintains a flank position for better control of the team, while the general-purpose officer assumes the opposite flank. The assistant team leader will assume the rear guard position during aggressive movement and a flank position during slow deliberate searching. This allows for a 360-degree coverage to be maintained while moving.

Four - Officer Diamond Formation – Aggressive Movement

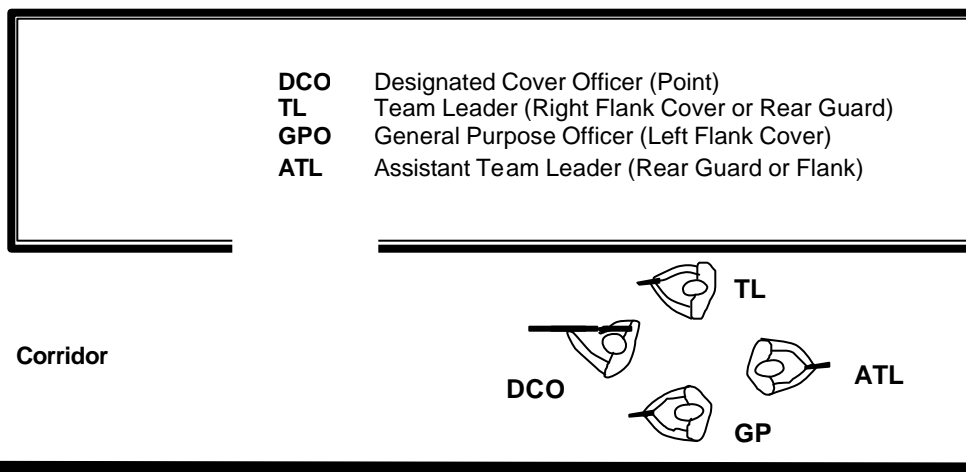


Figure 1

Travel is conducted in a fluid movement - aggressive, controlled and precise. Each officer must remain flexible as individual responsibilities can vary in an ever-changing and unpredictable environment.

In addition, communication within the team and with the Incident Command Post is critical. Never assume everyone else sees what you see. When you see a threat, **communicate** the threat and verify all team members are aware of it.

The assistant team leader will be responsible for broadcasting the information to the Incident Command Post. If the assistant team leader is unable due to the tactical situation, then another member of the team should ensure the information is conveyed to the Incident Command Post. This will prevent incidents of friendly fire, and assist the Incident Commander in coordinating the search for the suspect and rescue of victims.

Use of Deadly Force

When a suspect's actions present an **Immediate Defense Of Life (IDOL)** situation to an officer or other persons, it may be appropriate to use lethal force. Officers shall not fire under conditions that would subject bystanders or hostages to death or possible injury, except to preserve life or prevent serious bodily injury.

Cover Fire

Cover fire is defined as "controlled and deliberate fire, directed at a life-endangering threat, where an officer reasonably believes the threat to be located." It can be utilized when exposed to an immediate life-endangering threat in order to protect others and stop the threat. The decision to utilize cover fire should be consistent with the threat and should be considered deadly force. A supporting contact team can utilize controlled cover fire to distract the assailant from shooting officers moving to gain a tactical advantage or conduct an officer/victim rescue operation.

Prior to using cover fire, the following should be considered:

- ◆ All concerned personnel must be alerted that cover fire will be employed prior to its use;
- ◆ A safe background
- ◆ Cover fire should not be used when it places innocent persons at a greater risk than the actions of the assailant.

A supporting contact team can utilize controlled cover fire to distract the assailant from shooting officers moving to gain a tactical advantage or conduct an officer/victim rescue operation.

Explosive Devices

Incidents may occur that involve unexploded improvised explosive devices (bombs). If live bombs are encountered, the contact team must visually inspect the devices for potential detonation mechanisms (timing device, trip wires, lit fuse, etc.). **Do not move or touch the device.** Consider an alternate route based on the condition of the device, i.e., timer activated or a burning fuse. The officer who sees the bomb needs to verbalize its location and move past it, if possible. Do not assume that other team members have seen the device. Mark the area and verbally report the location of the bomb to the Incident Command Post. An officer should be posted to control the area surrounding the bomb as soon as possible. Always be aware of possible booby traps even on a rapid deployment. Terrorists are routinely trained on how to make and place booby traps using hand grenades to avoid capture and facilitate their escape.

What to do when a Contact or Rescue Team locates a possible explosive device:

1. Visually inspect the device.
2. Consider alternate route based on condition of device, i.e., timer activated or burning fuse. Move quickly away from device.
3. Do not move or touch the device.
4. Verbalize location of the device to team.
5. Report location to ICP.
6. Limit use of radios, cell phones or MDT's.
7. Move past device quickly and continue search.
8. Mark location of device and post an officer to warn others.
9. Be aware of possible booby traps.

RESCUE TEAMS

The priorities for a Rescue Team are to locate, recover, and facilitate the evacuation process of victims to safe areas or to medical personnel for treatment. If there is a non-ambulatory victim who needs medical attention, a rescue team is required to extricate the individual. Victims who are able to walk should be directed to a triage or safe area. The Rescue Team members will proceed in a diamond formation, providing 360-degree coverage during ingress and egress movement. Rescue Teams should broadcast the location of the suspect if known. If a Rescue Team encounters the suspect, it should convert to a Contact Team and stop the suspect's deadly behavior.

Rescue Team Mission

Depending upon the situation, a Rescue Team can follow behind the Contact Team. During that movement, the Rescue Team may encounter multiple victims within the crisis site who are in close proximity. If so, the Rescue Team can establish fields of cover and provide a "safe zone" for the victims (see Figure 3). This safe zone may be used to establish triage and/or a subsequent rallying point for additional Rescue Teams.

If the victims are scattered, individual rescues may be necessary. After the Rescue Team has reached the victim, the point officer (DCO) will maintain forward security, the team leader will provide rearward cover, and the additional officers will carry the victim out to safety.

Detailed below is the preferred technique for lifting and recovering a victim:

1. The first officer will place the victim into a supine position and stand next to the victim's head. (Figure 2a)
2. The second officer will take a position next to the victim's feet. (Figure 2a)
3. The first officer will reach under the victim's shoulders and lift the victim into a seated position. (Figure 2a)
4. The second officer may assist by placing the victim's hands on waistline. (Figure 2a)
5. The first officer will reach under the victim's arms, grasp the victim's wrists, cross them, then pull the wrists toward the victim's chest and prepare to lift. (Figure 2a)
6. The second officer (facing away from the first officer) grasps the victim's ankles, or legs. (Figure 2a)
7. Using the legs to lift, the officers stand while holding the victim. (Figure 2b)
8. Both officers will communicate that they are ready and, under the direction of the team leader, exit the location.
9. Responsibility to provide cover will vary and necessitates officer flexibility.



Figure 2a



Figure 2b

The victim will be carried out as safely and expeditiously as possible. The point officer and rear guard officer exchange duties as the team moves out. After evacuating the location, the victim is taken to the medical triage staging area for treatment. **Remember** to remain alert during the recovery for the possibility of contacting an armed assailant.

ZONES OF DIMINISHING THREAT

Like a hazardous materials incident, the scene of an active shooter will be broken up into four zones with diminishing levels of threat to the rescuers. At the scene of an active shooter situation, the Department will be working closely with members of the Los Angeles Fire Department Emergency Medical Services (EMS) who will treat the victims. This necessitates the need to define clear areas where there is a reduced threat to rescue personnel. These zones are the Hot Area, Warm Area, Safety Zone and Cold Area. Connecting the Cold Area and passing through the Warm Area is a Safety Corridor, which is the path law enforcement uses to escort EMS personnel to Safety Zone.

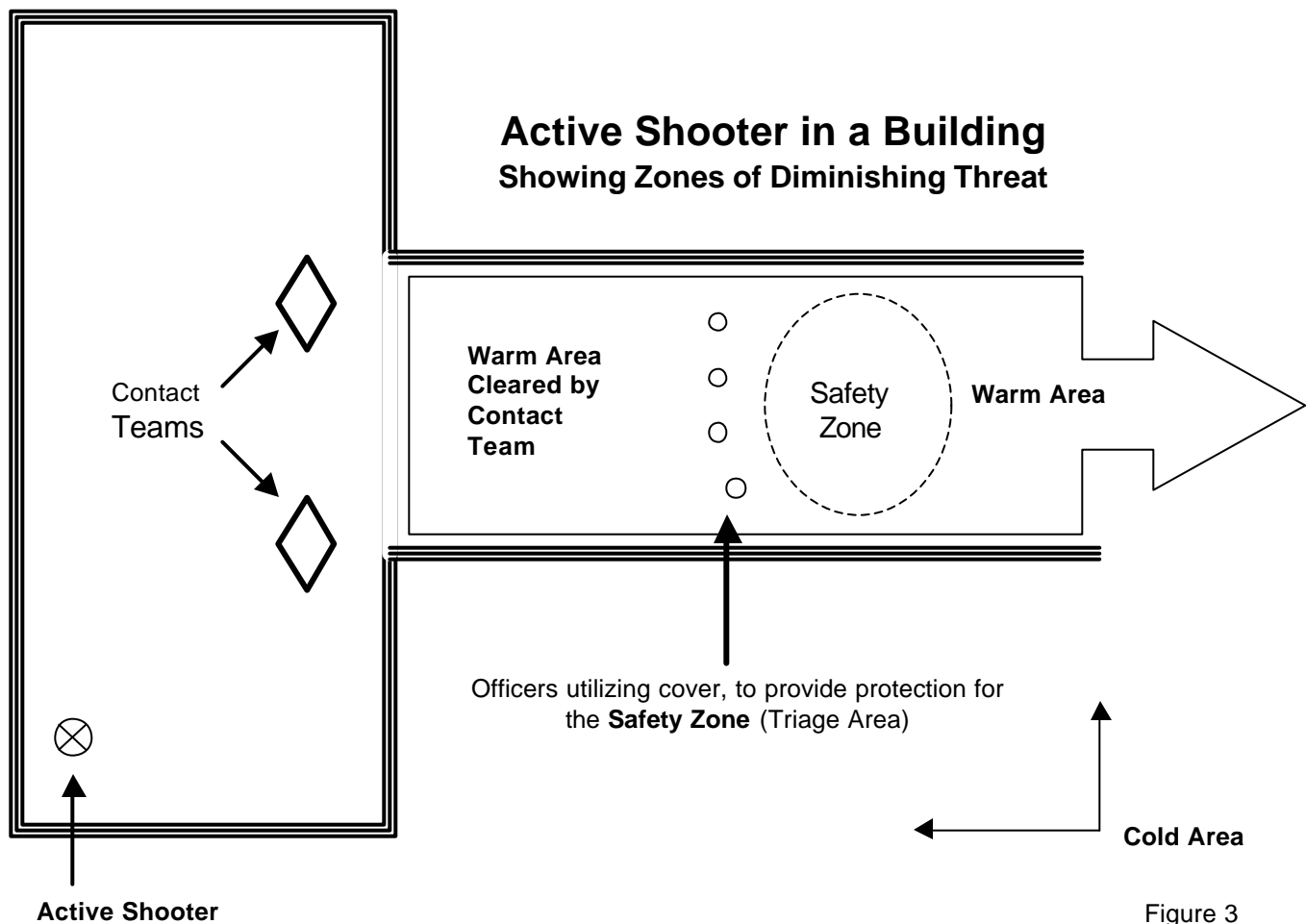


Figure 3

Firefighters and paramedics will normally enter a Warm Area accompanied by law enforcement personnel, unless there are mitigating circumstances that will then require approval by the Incident Commander with concurrence of a fire department supervisor. Law enforcement personnel assigned to

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protect EMS personnel will remain with them in the Warm Area and Safety Zone until the situation is resolved. Emergency Medical Services personnel will follow the tactical direction of law enforcement officers. Once escorted to the Safety Zone, EMS personnel will determine the medical severity of the victims and request Rescue Team escort for victims prioritized for immediate evacuation. All Rescue Teams should know the location of the Safety Zone. Rescue Teams should take the injured victims either to the Safety Zone, or a triage location in the Cold Area, whichever is more practicable, or as determined by the Incident Commander.

Zone	Personnel in Area	Description
Hot Area	Contact Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ An unsecured area, where the active shooter may be present.▪ Contact Teams will be searching for the suspect.▪ Generally, EMS personnel will not enter this area
Warm Area	Contact Teams Rescue Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ An unsecured area that has been cleared by a Contact Team.▪ Rescue Teams are sent for victim evacuation.
Cold Area	Needed Rescue Personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Area where there is little or no threat from the suspect.▪ Location of the Command Post, and where personnel are staged.
Safety Zone	Rescue Teams EMS Personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Zone within the Warm Area that is secured by law enforcement personnel to conduct triage and treat victims.▪ Once established, EMS personnel do not leave the Safe Zone without an escort by law enforcement personnel.▪ Examples are a cleared and secured room, or a corridor secured by a sufficient number of officers to provide protection for EMS personnel.
Safety Corridor	Rescue Teams EMS Personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ A path which law enforcement personnel may escort fire fighters, paramedics and perhaps victims from the Cold Area, through the Warm Area to the Safety Zone and back again.

CONCLUSION

When officers encounter an incident where immediate action and rapid deployment tactics are needed, time is of the essence. The immediate and swift implementation of "Contact" and "Rescue" teams will increase the likelihood of saving the lives of the people exposed to the active shooter. Through the use of expedited and decisive leadership in implementing these tactics, officers will bring order to chaos, and increase the safety of all those involved.

Field Training Services Unit
Continuing Education Division

Distribution "A"