

## Chapter 11 -IFPO-CPO

# Active Assailant Preparedness: Beyond Active Shooter Response

# Active Assailants

- ▶ “Active assailant” has become more accepted as the proper term in the security industry. This is based on the fact that the attackers have used a variety of methods to cause mass violence: Vehicles, explosives, edged weapons, fire, etc.

Active assailants are motivated by factors such as:

- ▶ Revenge
- ▶ Politics
- ▶ Religion
- ▶ Ethnic hatred
- ▶ Research on active assailant phenomenon has focused on firearms-based attacks, commonly referred to as “active shooter” incidents.
- ▶ Most active shooter incidents involve assailants entering a facility and using firearms at close range.
- ▶ The Las Vegas festival shooting illustrates the importance of considering the threat of long-range weapons fire as another attack vector available to assailants.

# Workplace Violence Prevention

- ▶ All organizations should have a formal Workplace Violence Prevention and Intervention policy in place.
- ▶ OSHA defines workplace violence as a hazard covered under the General Duty Clause (OSHA, 2018.)
- ▶ Organizations are legally required to take reasonable measures to keep the workplace free from incidents of workplace violence.
- ▶ Workplace violence ranks among the top four causes of death in the workplace.
- ▶ ALL stakeholders within an organization must have an understanding of the risks posed by workplace violence so that they can commit the proper resources to prevent or mitigate the risk.
- ▶ Workplace violence prevention programs are NOT the sole responsibility of the organization's security/protecting department.
- ▶ All employees should be able to identify the warning signs of workplace violence and how to report their suspicions.

# Training

- ▶ Failure to provide training to employees reduces the likelihood that they will accurately recognize the warning signs of violence. If they do happen to recognize the warning signs, they will not have the proper guidance on how to report or who to report to.
- ▶ Individual employees should be trained on the categories and prevalence of workplace violence.

## Levels of Training

- ▶ All employees should be trained to identify warning signs of violence and how to report their concerns about the individual displaying the indicators of potential violence.
- ▶ All employees should be trained in techniques and tactics to be used during an active assailant incident.
- ▶ Leaders and Human Resources personnel should be trained to implement their responsibilities within an effective Workplace Violence and Intervention program.

# Threat Detection and Assessment

- ▶ A multidisciplinary Threat Management Team should be established to evaluate the threat posed by individuals who are displaying indicators of potential violence or threats.
- ▶ This team should be trained and rely on educated personnel to identify individuals who have the intentions and capabilities to perpetrate workplace violence

## Forms of Workplace Violence

Workplace violence can take many forms such as:

- ▶ Disgruntled/former employee seeking revenge
- ▶ Domestic violence offenders
- ▶ Violent crime: Robbery, assault, etc.
- ▶ Random active assailant incidents that target people in public spaces, malls, schools, houses of worship and other “soft” target venues.

# Mental Health Issues

- ▶ Most active assailants experience a mental health crisis that escalates their behavior towards violence: Stress, social isolation personal/professional setbacks, substance abuse, etc.
- ▶ Individuals do not, typically, “snap”. They spend significant time being impacted by stress that will eventually overwhelm them.
- ▶ A variety of events can serve as the “triggering event” that makes an individual escalate to workplace violence.
- ▶ Examples of “triggering events” are as follow:
  - ▶ Disciplinary actions & Lay-off or termination
  - ▶ Loss of self-esteem & Illness to themselves or a close family member
  - ▶ Financial difficulties
  - ▶ Substance abuse
- ▶ Many active assailants display suicidal tendencies and intentions.
- ▶ Frequently, active assailants will commit suicide during an incident when confronted by responders.
- ▶ Assailants attack law enforcement personnel to force the officers to use deadly force against them. “Suicide by Cop”

# Security Measures

- ▶ Adequate planning for how to detect, respond and recover is critical to enable actions that will save lives and allows the organization to identify likely scenarios of attack.
- ▶ Determination the vulnerabilities that the organization has to the likely scenarios of attack then develop and implement countermeasure that will prevent, deter or respond to an incident.
- ▶ Security planning should allow for a scalable response based on the potential for violent actions.
- ▶ The level of security measures and operational disruption tolerated will be determined by the organization's threat tolerance level.
- ▶ When planning for dealing with active assailants and threats, a full audit of physical security systems and procedures should be conducted.

# Security Measures

- ▶ An organization should develop a plan for increasing security before a threat exists.
- ▶ This will allow for a quicker and less disruptive implementation during a stressful incident.
- ▶ Access control policies should be examined to ensure compliance with visitor and package inspection guidelines.
- ▶ Security personnel should conduct physical security inspections to verify that all entrances and exits are properly secured.
- ▶ Security personnel should verify that all access control devices are functioning properly.
- ▶ Security and leadership staff should be provided with a photo of the assailant as well as all vehicle information.
- ▶ Law enforcement should be notified of the organization's concerns.



# The Role of the Protection Officer

Security personnel will be used in a variety of roles during an active assailant incident:

- ▶ Initiation of emergency response and activation.
- ▶ Initiating lockdowns, alarms and warning systems.
- ▶ Making announcement over the PA system to keep employees updated regarding the incident, the location along with a description and actions of the assailant.
- ▶ Observe video activity and notify law enforcement
- ▶ Secure areas by locking down entrances and elevators.
- ▶ Armed security personnel can be used as first responders who engage and neutralize the assailant.