

	<b>HARRISONBURG POLICE DEPARTMENT</b> General Orders	<b>Policy Number:</b> 418
	<b>Chapter:</b> Field Operations	<b>Total Pages:</b> 5
	<b>Section:</b> Rapid Response and Deployment	<b>Issue Date:</b> 07/02/2021
	<b>Issued By:</b> Kelley Warner, Chief of Police	<b>Effective Date:</b> 07/02/2021
	<b>Replaces:</b> All General Orders Previously Issued Relative to Subject	
<b>VALEAC Standards: ADM.19.03, OPR.05.01 (e)</b>		

## A. POLICY AND PURPOSE

Violence that is committed in schools, workplaces and other locations by individuals or a group of individuals who are determined to target and kill persons and to create mass casualties presents a difficult situation for law enforcement. The purpose of this policy is to identify guidelines and factors that will assist officers in situations that call for rapid response and deployment.

The Harrisonburg Police Department will endeavor to plan for rapid response to crisis situations, and to coordinate response planning with other emergency services as well as with those who are responsible for operating sites that may be the target of a critical incident.

Nothing in this policy shall preclude the use of reasonable force, deadly or otherwise, by employees of the Department in protecting themselves or others from death or serious injury.

## B. ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

All employees are expected to fully comply with the guidelines and timelines set forth in this policy. Responsibility rests with the supervisor to ensure that any violations of policy are investigated and appropriate training, counseling and/or disciplinary action is initiated. This directive is for internal use only and does not enlarge an employee's civil liability in any way. It should not be construed as the creation of a higher standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party claims. Violation of this directive, if proven, can only form the basis of a complaint by this department, and then only in a non-judicial administrative setting.

## C. DEFINITIONS

**Active shooter** – One or more subjects who participate in a random or systematic shooting spree, demonstrating their intent to continuously harm others. The overriding objective of an active shooter appears to be that of mass murder, rather than other criminal conduct, such as robbery, hostage taking, etc. For the purpose of this policy, the term “active shooter” will also include anyone who uses any other deadly weapon to systematically or randomly inflict death or serious bodily injury on others over a period of time.

**Contact team** - A team that is usually comprised of police officers with the purpose of locating the active shooter(s) and preventing further violence.

**Immediate deployment/rapid intervention** – The swift and immediate deployment of law enforcement resources to an on-going, life threatening situation where delayed deployment could otherwise result in death or serious bodily injury to innocent persons. Immediate deployment/ rapid intervention tactics are not a substitute for conventional response to a barricaded gunman/ hostage situation.

**Incident Command System** - This is the model tool for command, control, communication, and coordination to a response. It provides a means to coordinate the efforts of individual officers and agencies as they work toward the common goal of stabilizing the incident and protecting life, property, and the environment during an active shooter incident. Our department will establish a Forward Commander and an Incident Commander.

**Rescue Task Force (RTF)**- A Rescue Task Force (RTF) is a group of responding Police and Fire/Rescue personnel who enter a "Warm Zone" to effect a rescue of injured persons located inside the Warm Zone.

**Search and rescue team** - A team that is usually comprised of police officers with the purpose of locating and providing safe passage to a secure area for injured and non-injured victims.

#### **Threat Zones-**

- a. **Hot Zone**-an operational, geographic, unsecure area, consisting of the incident location that presents a direct and immediate threat to personal safety or health
- b. **Warm Zone**- an operational, geographic area with a potential threat to personal safety or health. The warm zone typically exists between the hot zone and the cold zone. This zone is established and secured by Law Enforcement. Rescue Task Forces (Fire/Rescue and Law Enforcement personnel) are able to enter and remove patients without providing treatment.
- c. **Cold Zone**-an operational, geographic area surrounding the warm zone where first responders can operate with minimal threat to personal safety or health. In this zone Fire/Rescue personnel can provide treatment to patients.

## **D. CONSIDERATIONS**

When dealing with a crisis situation, officers should:

- a. Assess the immediate situation and take reasonable steps to maintain operative control of the incident.
- b. Obtain, explore and analyze sources of intelligence and known information regarding the circumstances, location and suspect involved in the incident.
- c. Attempt to attain a tactical advantage over the suspect by reducing, preventing, or eliminating any known or perceived threat.
- d. Attempt, if feasible and based upon the suspect's actions and danger to others, a negotiated surrender of the suspect and release of the hostages.

## **E. FIRST RESPONSE**

If there is a reasonable belief that acts or threats by a suspect are placing lives in imminent danger, first responding officers should consider reasonable options to reduce, prevent or eliminate the threat. Officers must decide, often under a multitude of difficult and rapidly evolving circumstances, whether to advance on the suspect, take other actions to deal with the threat or wait for additional resources.

If a suspect is actively engaged in the infliction of serious bodily harm or other life-threatening activity toward others, officers should take immediate action, if reasonably practicable, while requesting additional assistance.

Officers should remain aware of the possibility that an incident may be part of a coordinated multi-location attack that may require some capacity to respond to incidents at other locations.

When deciding on a course of action officers should consider:

- a. Whether to advance on or engage a suspect who is still a possible or perceived threat to others. Any advancement or engagement should be based on information known or received at the time.
- b. Whether to wait for additional resources or personnel. This does not preclude an individual officer from taking immediate action.
- c. Whether individuals who are under imminent threat can be moved or evacuated with reasonable safety.
- d. Whether the suspect can be contained or denied access to victims.
- e. Whether the officers have the ability to effectively communicate with other personnel or resources.
- f. Whether planned tactics can be effectively deployed.
- g. The availability of rifles, shotguns, shields, breaching tools, control devices and any other appropriate tools, and whether the deployment of these tools will provide a tactical advantage.
- h. The Department's training on the priority of life scale.

In the case of a barricaded or trapped suspect, with no hostages and no immediate threat to others, officers should consider covering escape routes and evacuating persons as appropriate, while summoning and waiting for additional assistance (e.g., special weapons and tactics and/or hostage negotiation team response).

## **a. WHAT TO EXPECT UPON ENTRY**

The dynamic environment of an active shooter scenario will bring with it a host of problems. These may include, but are not limited to:

- a. Noise from alarms, people screaming, etc., which negatively affect communications.
- b. Activated fire suppression systems and sprinkler systems.
- c. Frightened victims, some who may be hiding and/or preparing counter measures against any intruder.
- d. Victims/Innocents not responding to law enforcement direction.
- e. Carnage and multiple traumatic injuries.

- f. Explosive devices, if encountered:
  - 1. DO NOT move or touch them.
  - 2. Evacuate/Isolate the area, but maintain security
  - 3. Identify and, if possible, verbally report location(s) of device(s).
  - 4. DO NOT physically inspect device for potential detonation (timing device, trip wire, lit fuse, etc.)

## **b. MUTUAL AID SUPPORT**

- a. Immediately following the initial notification of an active shooter at any location within the City of Harrisonburg, resources from surrounding jurisdictions will undoubtedly begin to arrive to offer assistance. The Incident Commander will have the responsibility of allocating these resources and coordinating a parking/staging area for vehicles.
  - 1. Off-duty officers residing within the area or in the area on unrelated matters.
  - 2. Law enforcement agencies from adjoining counties.
  - 3. Fire and Rescue resources
  - 4. State agencies that offer relief assistance.
  - 5. Federal agencies that offer relief assistance.
- b. If a responding officer, as listed above, arrives to provide assistance and is able to do so, on-scene officers will decide the best manner in which assistance can be rendered. These officers may also be required to act as members of the initial contact team.
- c. Additional support will be handled in accordance with established mutual aid agreements and through the Incident Command System.

## **c. USE OF FORCE**

Refer to General Order: Use of Force. When the suspect(s)' actions present an immediate threat of death or serious bodily injury, it may become necessary to use deadly force to stop that behavior. All applicable guidelines concerning the use of force by a law enforcement officer will apply.

## **d. ERT ARRIVAL**

When ERT support arrives, they are generally better-equipped and trained to resolve crisis scenarios. However, due to the possible size and scopes of an active shooter scenario, continued assistance by first responders is critical.

## **F. INCIDENT SCENE CONTROL**

The Incident Scene Commander should coordinate critical incident activities. Efforts should include:

- a. Availability of building plans and venue schematics of the target site.
- b. Establish/maintain communications interoperability with other law enforcement and emergency service agencies.

- c. Entry/evacuation routes from target site.
- d. Coordinating ERT activities with the SWAT and/or CNT commanders.
- e. Coordinating emergency medical and fire services resources.
- f. Equipment needs and other logistical support as the incident progresses.
- g. Coordinating efforts through the ICS model and establish a command structure as needed to address the size, scope, and duration of the incident.
- h. Delegation of assignments/responsibilities to maximize efficiency and effectiveness of responder efforts.

## **G. TRAINING**

Harrisonburg Police Department will train all sworn personnel on Immediate Deployment/Rapid Response tactics annually.

The Training Officer should include rapid response to critical incidents in the training plan. This training should address:

- a. Identification/orientation of likely critical incident target sites, such as schools, shopping centers, entertainment venues and sporting event venues.
- b. Communications interoperability with command, other law enforcement and emergency service agencies.
- c. Patrol first-response training
- d. Equipment familiarity and training, including patrol rifle, Go Bag, breaching tools, etc.
- e. Rescue Task Force and first aid, including gunshot trauma.
- f. Reality-based scenario training (e.g., active shooter, disgruntled violent worker).
- g. Tactics/tech for rapid response
- h. Command and control concepts and philosophies
- i. Joint training to include other local first responder agencies as well as on-site occupants to include private security firms.
- j. Mutual Aid agreements with other agencies.

## **H. SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT**

The Operations Commander should ensure that supplies and equipment required for support of rapid response and deployment events is identified and properly stored in a location and manner to ensure operational readiness. These supplies and equipment should be inspected and inventoried no less than semi-annually and any deficiencies should be promptly resolved.