Active Assailant ~~Shooter/Killer~~ Incidents

Eff. Date ~~02/02/2026~~

Purpose

Establish a standard procedure for the Madison Police Department's (MPD) response to incidents involving active assailants ~~shooters/killers~~.

Policy

The fundamental goals driving the police response to an active assailant ~~shooter/killer~~ are to "Stop the Killing and Stop the Dying".

MPD's objectives in dealing with active assailant ~~shooter/killer~~ incidents are, in order of priority:

1. Threat: Stop the killing by neutralizing threats using a reasonable amount of force
2. Rescue: Stop the dying in coordination with medical personnel
3. Clear: Make the incident scene safe
4. Reunification and Investigation

These objectives are aligned with the Active Shooter Incident Management (ASIM) system to ensure a standardized and integrated response of law enforcement, fire, EMS, and other first responding agencies throughout Dane County. [redacted content].

SAFETY PRIORITIES

Operational and tactical decisions will be grounded in the following safety priorities, in order of precedence:

1. Hostages and community members
2. Law enforcement personnel
3. Suspects and subjects

This categorization is based on an individual's potential jeopardy and ability to control the incident's ~~event's~~ outcome.

Definitions

Active Assailant Incident ~~Shooting/Killing Event~~: An incident in which one or more persons have used, or are reasonably likely to use, deadly force in an ongoing manner that demonstrates their intent to continuously or systematically kill or wound others. The subject's overriding objective appears to be mass murder, rather than other criminal conduct. This includes situations where there is an active, ongoing deadly threat, including those from firearms, explosives, knives, vehicles, and other weapons.

Direct to Threat Response: An immediate response by one or more officers to active killing based on the reasonable belief that waiting for the arrival of additional officers would result in death or great bodily harm to others.

LCAN Report: A structured communication method to provide briefing information and create a common operating picture. The method involves communicating an officer's *location*, *conditions*, *actions*, and *needs*.

Operational Zones: Zone designations are dynamic and will change as an incident develops.

Hot Zone: Physical location(s) likely, or currently, under direct threat by a person(s) or other mechanism (improvised explosive device, etc.).
Warm Zone: Physical location(s) with a moderate threat level. An active threat is not currently occurring but could be possible. The area may not be completely clear; however, security measures are in place for limited protection. May be outside the hot zone or in security pockets created within the hot zone.
Cold Zone: An area with no reasonable belief that a threat is present. Generally, the command post, staging, and reunification are organized and located within this zone.

Contact Team(s) (CT):
[redacted content].

Rescue Task Force(s) (RFT): A mixed discipline team, [redacted content]. Rescue task force teams are coordinated through the Triage Group Supervisor.

Staging: A physical location established in the cold zone staffed by law enforcement and fire/EMS personnel.

[redacted content].

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Tactical Group Supervisor (Tactical): [redacted content].

Triage Group Supervisor (Triage): Staffed by fire/EMS personnel and co-located with Tactical and Transport. Controls and coordinates rescue task force response; reports directly to the Medical Branch Supervisor.

Transport Group Supervisor (Transport): Staffed by fire/EMS personnel and co-located with Tactical and Triage. Controls and coordinates ambulance response.

Casualty Collection Point (CCP): Specific warm zone location with security measures to gather nearby casualties and provide indirect threat care. Multiple CCPs can be utilized if necessary.

Ambulance Exchange Point (AEP): Specific warm zone location where an ambulance is sent to pick up evacuated survivors; multiple AEPs can be utilized if necessary. [redacted content].

Secure Assembly Area (SAA): Specific location in the warm zone where uninjured subjects from the impacted site are gathered and organized for accountability. This location provides easier access for the transportation of subjects to a separate reunification site.

Reunification: Physical location in the cold zone where the process of connecting survivors to their families/caregivers occurs.

Response Procedures

THREAT RESPONSE

After being dispatched to an active assailant incident ~~shooter/killer event,~~ initial responding personnel will perform an initial assessment:

[redacted content].

First Arriving Officer(s)

Once on scene, officers should evaluate if a driving force/stimulus is present. If officers believe there is active killing in progress and a delay in taking police action could result in death or great bodily harm, [redacted content].

CONTACT TEAM

A security element generally consisting of [redacted content] responsible for "Stopping the Killing and Stopping the Dying". [redacted content] Contact teams are responsible for:

[redacted content]

A contact team response to an active assailant ~~shooter/killer~~ situation is preferred in nearly all active assailant ~~shooter/killer~~ situations—irrespective of any initial actions that may have been taken. Even if the threat seemingly has been terminated, it is optimal that contact teams render the location safe by assisting in screening and orderly evacuating persons to a designated area and in locating any other persons still in hiding.

Tactical Group Supervisor

As initial contact team(s) stop the threat(s), a command structure must be established to coordinate the additional responding resources. Formal command outside the impacted site should be established early, preferably around the [redacted content] This person should:

[redacted content]

[redacted content] The process of assigning personnel to roles is achieved through the Staging Manager; this position receives personnel/resources, logs their arrival, and connects them with requests from Tactical or Command. The first law enforcement officer arriving at staging will become the LE Staging Manager unless, or until, they are relieved. Fire/EMS personnel will also assign a Staging Manager. The staging manager will:

[redacted content]

- As the incident unfolds, and immediate needs have been met, Command may request personnel with specific job capabilities (e.g., detectives, investigators, commanders, SWAT, etc.). Begin sorting these individuals into separate groups for easy identification and deployment when requested.
- Staging should initially operate on the [redacted content]. As additional channels are added, scribes may be needed to communicate with personnel on these channels (e.g., Perimeter, Reunification, etc.).
- For personnel accountability, the Staging Manager should contact supervisory roles in the ASIM organizational chart to request the names and assignments of personnel who deployed to their location without reporting to staging.
- Keep the Incident Commander informed as resources run low to ensure additional resource requests can be fulfilled. If additional resources are needed, Dispatch and/or Emergency Management can help obtain them.

RESCUE RESPONSE

A Rescue Task Force (RTF) is a mixed discipline team, [redacted content]

[redacted content]

CLEAR AND EVACUATION RESPONSE

[redacted content]

COMMAND AND CONTROL

Establishing an Incident Command System (ICS) structure early in an active assailant incident ~~shooter/killer event~~ is necessary to coordinate personnel, incoming resources, and communication. The ICS structure begins when the first arriving officer takes command and grows as command is transferred to incoming personnel.

First LE Supervisor

As additional supervisors arrive, [redacted content]. This position should:

[redacted content]

Second LE Supervisor (Incident Commander)

Once the CP has been established, the Incident Commander (IC) should receive an LCAN briefing, take command from the First LE Supervisor, and guide overall incident strategy. The IC will assign the following roles:

- Intelligence & Investigations (e.g., ISB)
- Lead Public Information Officer (PIO)
- Reunification Branch Supervisor
- Additional roles as necessary (e.g., site liaisons, Emergency Operations Center liaison, etc.)

REUNIFICATION

Reunification is typically used to reunite children with a caregiver; however, this process may also be appropriate for reuniting adults, property, etc. The following section uses language describing the reunification of children with their caregivers.

If reunification is needed, the CP should first confirm if the impacted site has a reunification plan; [redacted content]. Pre-designated reunification plans should be used to guide the reunification process unless/until they are no longer feasible.

The City of Madison Emergency Manager and/or Dane County Emergency Management should assist with the reunification process; this includes identifying a reunification site, coordinating survivor transportation (as necessary), and organizing community resources. Due to the potential complexity of reunification, clear lines of communication must be established between site supervisors (e.g., reunification site, SAA, etc.) and the CP via the Reunification Branch Supervisor. [redacted content].
The ASIM checklist outlines essential roles in reunification and should be consulted. Police roles in reunification may include:

- *Site Security*: [redacted content]
- *Interviews:* Consideration must be given to where and when interviews with survivors will occur; this is coordinated between the Reunification Branch Supervisor and the Intelligence Section.
- *Property Release*: Assist with releasing uninvolved vehicles or essential items from the impacted site.
- *Other Duties as Necessary*: [redacted content]. Specific roles in this protocol include:
    - *Services Group:* This group is responsible for setting up the reunification site and controlling the flow of people through it. Additional services in this group include medical units, transportation units, and family assistance center resources.
    - *Accountability Group*: This group coordinates the release of children to their guardians. Roles in the group include:

a) *Greeters* to receive guardians
b) *Checkers* to collect guardian/child information
c) *Reunifiers* to bring children from a holding area to their guardian and confirm the child is released to the appropriate person
d) *Accountants* to maintain a master roster
e) *Exit Control* to check in with parties as they leave. [redacted content].

- *Assembly Group:* This group is responsible for caring for children from their arrival at the reunification site's student assembly area until they are reunited with a guardian. Roles in this section include:
  a) *Class Leaders* managing smaller groups of children
  b) *Entertainment* to keep children occupied during waiting periods
  c) *Nutritional Support* to ensure water and snacks are available as necessary.

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