



DOMESTIC DEPENDENT ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

700 Westpark Drive, Peachtree City GA 30269

(678) 364-8000 / (770) 632-8720 (fax)

June 10, 2014

DDESS SOP 9001

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE DOMESTIC DEPENDENT  
ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS (DDESS)  
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

SUBJECT: Active Shooter Incident Procedures

Reference: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, "Active Shooter: How to Respond",  
October 2008

1. PURPOSE

1.1. The purpose of this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is to establish a broad general perspective of an Active Shooter incident and measures to prevent, intervene, and react to Active Shooter events. This SOP is non-directive in nature.

1.2. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) defines an Active Shooter as "an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area". In its definition, DHS notes that "in most cases, active shooters use firearms(s) and there is no pattern or method to their selection of victims".

1.3. Active shooter situations are unpredictable and evolve quickly. Typically, the immediate deployment of law enforcement is required to stop the shooting and mitigate further harm to victims.

2. APPLICABILITY AND SCOPE

This SOP applies to all DDESS Area Service Center (ASC) federal and contracted employees. All personnel assigned to the ASC will review and become familiar with these requirements.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 The DDESS Director shall monitor implementation and compliance with this SOP.

3.2 The DDESS ASC Office of Security and Safety is responsible for implementation and compliance with this SOP.

#### 4. PROCEDURES

4.1. Active shooter situations are unpredictable and evolve quickly. Typically, the immediate deployment of law enforcement is required to stop the shooting and mitigate further harm to victims.

4.2. Because active shooter situations are often over within 10 to 15 minutes, before law enforcement arrives on scene, individuals must be prepared both mentally and physically to deal with an active shooter situation.

#### 4.3. **Training**

4.3.1. DDESS Office of Safety and Security (OSS) will conduct annual Active Shooter Training for all DDESS employees working in the ASC. (NOTE: When contractor participation is not mandated within the employment contract, participation will then be “highly encouraged”)

4.3.2. DDESS OSS will conduct annual Active Shooter Exercises. All exercises and drills should be coordinated with Local Law Enforcement/Fire, the Department of Homeland Security, and Federal Protective Services to provide them the opportunity to participate. This will prepare staff to effectively respond and help minimize the loss of life.

4.3.3. Training will be developed based on the response options outlined by the Department of Homeland Security in “Active Shooter: How to Respond”.

4.3.4. Components of an Active Shooter Training Plan:

- a. recognizing the sound of gunshots;
- b. reacting quickly when gunshots are heard and/or when a shooting is witnessed;
- c. evacuating the area;
- d. hiding out;
- e. calling 911;
- f. reacting when law enforcement arrives;
- g. adopting the survival mindset during time of crisis.

#### 4.4. **Preparedness**

4.4.1. Include Active Shooter response procedures in the DDESS ASC AT Plan.

4.4.2. Senior management shall review emergency plans annually, or as necessary, based on local threat.

4.4.3. Ensure plans include relevant information and address individuals with special needs/functional needs.

4.4.4. Senior management shall establish a procedure for performing a vulnerability analysis review and threat assessment to determine necessary resources to mitigate an Active Shooter incident (at least annually).

4.4.5. Senior management shall establish an Emergency Communications Team. The Emergency Communications Team is comprised of staff trained to send out One Call Now Alerts. They may be contacted following an Active Shooter incident and instructed to initiate a One Call Now emergency message per the AT Plan.

4.4.6. Identify Crisis Response Professionals; before an incident ever occurs, senior management should identify trained mental health professionals within the agency or the community who would be available to respond in the event of an incident. When an incident occurs, involve these emergency mental health consultants as soon as possible. They will generally meet with management first, working down the chain, and then with employees. Based on what the consultants learn, they will offer services such as debriefings and informal counseling.

4.4.7. Post evacuation routes in conspicuous locations throughout the facility. Institute access controls (keys, proximity cards, security pass codes).

4.4.8. Establish designated evacuation assembly locations. (Current active shooter evacuation assembly location is: Brookside facility parking area located at 200 Westpark Drive; this location is directly across the street, southwest of the DDESS ASC.)

## **4.5. Prevention**

4.5.1. Foster a respectful workplace.

4.5.2. Human Resources (HR): HR is responsible for assisting in the recognition of employees at risk. Should a threat present itself, the Division Chief of Human Resources will utilize the HR Threat Assessment to review the situation.

- a. Conduct effective employee screening and background checks.
- b. Develop a process for reporting signs of potentially violent behavior.
- c. Make counseling services available to employees.
- d. Each employee is responsible to be aware of indications of workplace violence and take remedial actions accordingly. Employees typically do not just “snap”, but display indicators of potentially violent behavior over time. If these behaviors are recognized, they can often be managed and treated. Potentially violent behaviors by an employee may

include one or more of the following (this list of behaviors is not all-inclusive, nor is it intended as a mechanism for diagnosing violent tendencies):

- Increased use of alcohol and/or illegal drugs.
- Unexplained increase in absenteeism; vague physical complaints.
- Noticeable decrease in attention to appearance and hygiene.
- Depression / withdrawal.
- Resistance and overreaction to changes in policy and procedures.
- Repeated violations of company policies.
- Increased severe mood swings.
- Noticeably unstable, emotional responses.
- Explosive outbursts of anger or rage without provocation.
- Suicidal; comments about “putting things in order”.
- Behavior which is suspect of paranoia, (“everybody is against me”).
- Increasingly talks of problems at home.
- Escalation of domestic problems into the workplace; talk of severe financial problems.
- Talk of previous incidents of violence.
- Empathy with individuals committing violence.
- Increase in unsolicited comments about firearms, other dangerous weapons and violent crimes.

#### 4.5.3. Facility Manager

- a. Distribute critical items to appropriate managers / employees, including: Floor Plans, Keys, and Facility personnel lists and telephone numbers.
- b. Coordinate with OSS to ensure the physical security of the facility.
- c. Designate a point-of-contact with knowledge of the facility’s security procedures and floor plan to liaise with police and other emergency agencies in the event of an attack.
- d. Limit access to blueprints, floor plans, and other documents containing sensitive security information, but make sure these documents are available to law enforcement responding to an incident.

#### 4.5.4. Office of Safety and Security

- a. Develop the ASC AT Plan.
- b. Institute Access Control.
- c. Assemble Crisis Kits.
- d. Conduct Active Shooter Training and exercises.

#### 4.6. Responding to an Active Shooter Incident

4.6.1. In preference and priority order, there are three general options or responses when one is confronted by an active shooter situation:

a. **Evacuate:** (First Preference and Priority) if there is an accessible escape path, attempt to evacuate the premises.

- Have an escape route and plan in mind.
- Evacuate regardless of whether others agree to follow.
- Leave your belongings behind.
- Help others escape, when possible.
- Prevent individuals from entering an area where the active shooter may be.
- Follow the instructions of any police officers.
- Do not attempt to move wounded people.
- Keep your hands visible.
- Call 911 when you are safe.

b. **Hide:** (Second Preference and Priority) if evacuation is not possible, find a place to hide where the active shooter is less likely to find you.

- Hide in an area out of the shooter's view (i.e., an office with a closed and locked door). Your hiding place should not trap you or restrict your options for movement.
- Blockade the door(s) to your hiding place and lock the door(s).
- Hide behind something.
- Silence your cell phone.
- Call 911 if able to do so. If you cannot speak, leave the phone off the hook (keep an open line).

c. **Take action against the active shooter:** As a last resort, and only when your life is in imminent danger, attempt to disrupt and/or incapacitate the active shooter by:

- Acting as aggressively as possible against him/her.
- Throwing items and improvising weapons.
- Yelling.
- Committing to your actions.

#### 4.7. How to Respond and React When Law Enforcement Arrives

**NOTE:** The first officers to arrive to the scene will not stop to help injured persons. Expect rescue teams comprised of additional officers and emergency medical personnel to follow the initial officers. These rescue teams will treat and remove any injured persons. They may also call upon able-bodied individuals to assist in removing the wounded from the premises.

4.7.1. Law enforcement's purpose is to stop the active shooter as soon as possible. Officers will proceed directly to the area in which the last shots were heard.

4.7.2. Officers may wear regular patrol uniforms or external body armor (vests), Kevlar helmets, and other tactical equipment.

4.7.3. Officers may be armed with rifles, shotguns, and/or handguns.

4.7.4. Officers may use pepper spray or tear gas to control the situation.

4.7.5. Officers may shout commands and may push individuals to the ground for their safety.

4.7.6. Remain calm, and follow officers' instructions.

4.7.7. Put down any items in your hands (i.e., bags, jackets).

4.7.8. Immediately raise hands and spread fingers.

4.7.9. Do not stop to ask officers for help or direction when evacuating, just proceed in the direction from which officers are entering the premises.

4.7.10. Keep hands visible at all times.

**4.8. Employees should to the best of their ability provide the following information to law enforcement first responders or 911**

4.8.1. Location of the active shooter.

4.8.2. Number of shooters, if more than one.

4.8.3. Physical description of shooter(s).

4.8.4. Number and type of weapons held by the shooter(s)

4.8.5. Number of potential victims at the location.

**NOTE:** Once you have reached a safe location or an assembly point, you will likely be held in that area by law enforcement until the situation is under control, and all witnesses have been identified and questioned. Do not leave the safe location or assembly point until law enforcement authorities have instructed you to do so.

**4.9 Managing the Consequences of an Active Shooter Situation**

4.9.1. After the active shooter has been incapacitated and is no longer a threat, Senior Leadership should engage in post-event assessments and activities, including:

a. An accounting of all individuals at a designated assembly point to determine who, if anyone is missing and potentially injured. Given the nature of an active shooter incident, employees may or may not use designated assembly locations.

b. Initiate a One Call Now Message to inform employees of instructions and assembly locations.

c. Determining a method for notifying families of individuals affected by the active shooter, including notification of any casualties.

d. Assessing the psychological state of individuals at the scene, and referring them to health care specialists accordingly.

e. Identifying and filling any critical personnel or operational gaps left in the organization as a result of the active shooter.

4.9.2. Handle critical sites with care, this is a crime scene - Initially, the site of a violent incident will be secured as a crime scene and personnel will not be allowed to enter the facility.

4.9.3. Bring in crisis response professionals:

a. when an incident occurs, involve emergency mental health consultants as soon as possible;

b. based on what the consultants learn, they will offer services such as debriefings and informal counseling.

4.9.4. Share information with employees - Employees will have many questions, and they need the answers -- often more than once -- if they are to resolve the experience for themselves. Information will develop over time, so information strategies need to be simple and fluid.

4.9.5. Buffer those affected from post-event stresses - Effective coordination with the media and timely dissemination of information can help reduce media pressure on those who are the most vulnerable. Assistance with employee benefits and other administrative issues can reduce the burden on victims and families.

5. EFFECTIVE DATE: This SOP is effective upon publication.

Elizabeth Middlemiss, Ph.D.  
Interim Director, DDESS/DoDDS-Cuba