

Active Assailant

Performance Objectives

By the end of this training, you will be able to:

- 1. Describe two past Active Assailant incidents and their outcome**
- 2. Explain how past Active Assailant incidents led to current law enforcement policies regarding Active Assailant response**
- 3. Define Active Assailant**
- 4. Describe characteristics of an Active Assailant**
- 5. Explain how Active Assailant deployment differs from the deployment needed at a hostage/barricade situation**

Performance Objectives

- 6. Define the primary objective of response to Active Assailant**
- 7. Identify who can initiate an Active Assailant deployment**
- 8. Name intelligence sources when initiating Active Assailant deployment**
- 9. Explain importance of Incident Command System**
- 10. Explain the role and function EMS plays in response to Active Assailant**

Performance Objectives

- 11. Identify tactical considerations for off-duty/plainclothes officers during Active Assailant incidents**
- 12. Identify tactical considerations when executing Active Assailant deployment**
- 13. Explain the importance of initiating SWAT/Tactical Team response**

Performance Objectives

- 14. Define Element positions and responsibility of each position**
- 15. Explain when to cease Active Assailant deployment & switch to building clearing by responding officers or SWAT**
- 16. Demonstrate the ability to properly complete the skills exercises inclusive of three, four and five officer movement and clearing techniques**

Overview

- **Growing trend of mass violence by individuals**
- **May not be “shooter” – hence the change to “assailant”**
- **Traditional containment & negotiation not appropriate tactic in these incidents**
- **Shift in tactics providing authority & capability to respond prior to SWAT arrival**

School Shootings

- • Not a New Phenomenon
- • Disagreements Settled With Weapons
- • 1960's Survey of School Problems
- • No Geographic Region is Excluded
- • About School Shootings

EARLIEST RECORDED SCHOOL KILLINGS

- **JULY 26, 1764**

- ***“The Enoch Brown School Massacre”***

- **Franklin County, Pennsylvania**

- **Nine children were killed**

University of Texas at Austin

August 1, 1966

- Former Marine, barricaded self in
- University's 27 – story tower
- Charles Whitman killed his mother & wife the night before
- Whitman killed 14 people and wounded 30



Dunblane, Scotland

March 13, 1996



Anxious parents await word of their children – 15 of whom, ages 5 and 6, were slain, along with their teacher, in less than 3 minutes. Their murderer, 43-year-old Thomas Hamilton, committed suicide at the scene.

Springfield, Oregon – May 20, 1998



- 15-year-old Kip Kinkel bragged to fellow students about torturing animals (he had cut the heads off cats and mounted them on sticks, mutilated a cow, bragged about killing small animals and of stuffing lighted firecrackers in cats' mouths.)



Kip's parents

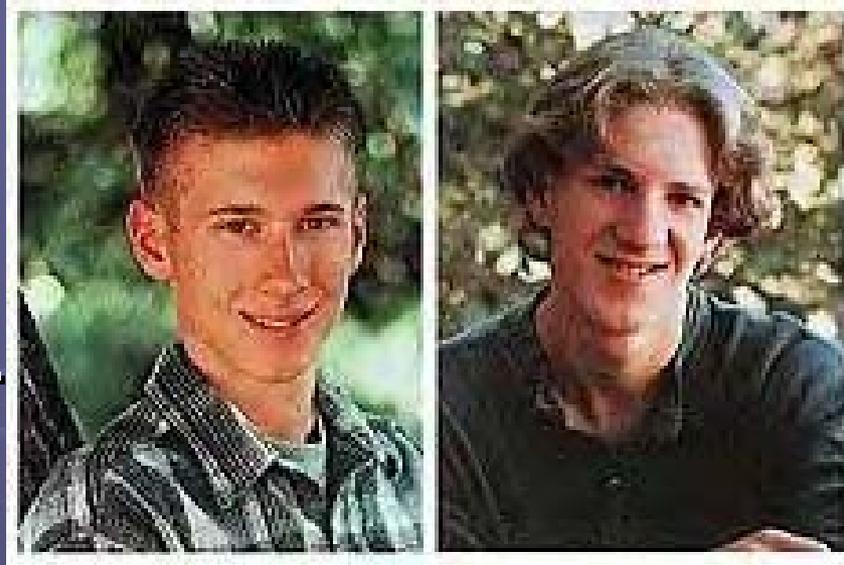
- He also had a fascination with guns and a quick temper that led him to be expelled from school twice in one week for acts of violence against fellow students. His classmates voted him "Most Likely to Start World War III."
- He said that "War would begin on 5/20/98."

Springfield, Oregon - May 20, 1998

- At 3:30 PM, he shot his father in the back of his head in the kitchen of their home
- At 6:00 PM, he shot his mother twice in the head and once in the heart as she arrived home
- On the morning of May 21, he drove his mother's car to school with four weapons and 1,127 rounds of ammo
- 2 dead and 22 wounded

Columbine High School,
Littleton, CO 4/20/1999

Eric Harris, Dylan Klebold



**They fired a total of 37
12 gauge rounds, 151 - 9mm
rounds, exploded 30 bombs
and had another 46 unexploded
bombs.**

**Within the span of 16 minutes, the gunmen killed
13 people and wounded 21 others.**



MAY 20 11 LIBERTY SUPERSTAN



German School Mass Murder April 26, 2002

Eighteen people died when an expelled former student went on a shooting spree at his school in the eastern German city of Erfurt. Masked and dressed in black, the gunman walked through classrooms killing 14 teachers, two schoolgirls and one of the first policemen on the scene before taking his own life.



A student's note
pleading for "Help"¹⁶

Reno, Nevada – March 14, 2006

- **Eighth Grader James Newman shoots two classmates with handgun outside cafeteria**
- **Teacher coaxes him to drop gun and “bear hugs” him until police take him into custody**



U.S. School Shootings

- **45 major U.S. school shootings in last 10 years (1997-2007)**
- **36 shootings in the eight years since Columbine HS (1999)**
- **12 shootings this school year alone (2006-2007)**
- **VA Tech – April 2007, highest number of victims of murder by firearm by one person at one time (mass murder) in U.S. history**

Salt Lake City, Utah - February 12, 2007

- Sulejman Talović enters Trolley Square mall armed with a shotgun, handgun and a backpack full of ammunition.
 - Killed five and wounded at least four.
 - Ogden Police Officer Kenneth Hammond off-duty in mall with his wife, exchanges shots with assailant until on-duty officers arrive.
 - Officers shoot and kill assailant.



Blacksburg, Virginia - 4/16/07



23-yr-old - VA TEC Student, Sun-Kyung Cho

Shot and killed 32 people



Active Assailant Defined

- **Armed person who has used deadly force on other persons and continues to do so while having unrestricted access to additional victims**
- **One or more persons randomly or systematically using deadly force on others and based on available intelligence will not stop aggressive hostile action without immediate and direct law enforcement intervention**

Common Characteristics - Active Assailants

- Focus on assaulting persons with whom they come into contact
- Intention is usually an expression of hatred or rage rather than committing a crime
- Likely to engage more than one target
 - High body count is the goal
- Presence not usually known until assault begins
- Often goes to locations where multiple victims are close at hand
 - Schools, theatres, concerts, shopping malls
 - May act as a sniper or engage multiple targets while on the move

Common Characteristics - Active Assailants

- **Containment and negotiation, normally associated with standoff incidents may not be useful**
- **Often better armed than initial responding officers**
- **May have planned attack to include sustained confrontation with police**
 - **Escape from police is usually not a priority**
- **May employ some type of diversion**

Common Characteristics - Active Assailants

- Usually suicidal, either by self-inflicted wound or by “suicide by cop”
- Some degree of familiarity with the location they choose for their attack
- Event may turn from active to static and back again
 - May become barricaded subject if access to victims is stopped

What is NOT an Active Assailant

- **Barricaded Suspect/Hostage Taker**
 - In a position of advantage, is armed, and has displayed violence
 - Suspect may or not be holding hostages and there is no indication that suspect is causing death or serious bodily injury. **A STATIC SITUATION**
- **Active Assailant deployment is NOT to be used in this situation or similar situations**
 - Traditional response (perimeter negotiation)

Intelligence en Route

- **Number of suspect(s)**
- **Number of victims/witnesses**
- **Size and location of event**
- **How reliable is the information**

Patrol Active Assailant Deployment

- **Active Assailant incidents have common elements but each is sufficiently unique**
- **These procedures are not meant to limit conventional police tactics**

Primary Objective

- **Save lives**
- **Capture or neutralize the assailant**
- **Deny access to additional victims**

Who Can Initiate Deployment?

- **One initial officer must take charge**
- **May be based on rank, expertise or seniority, but MUST BE MADE IMMEDIATELY**
- **May change to supervisor/commander after briefing**

Intelligence/Situational Analysis

- **Continuously changes based on new info**
- **Is this an Active Assailant event?**
- **Is immediate intervention necessary?**

SWAT/Tactical Teams

- **SWAT must be activated immediately for effective response but officers at the scene of an active assailant .**
- **DO NOT WAIT for SWAT**

Incident Command

- **ICS leads to successful conclusion**
- **Do not initiate unplanned response without control/command in place**
 - **At least one person with information on the tactical plan should remain at command post to brief**
 - **Command personnel must be on scene and fully briefed before assuming incident command**
 - **Command personnel should anticipate media response and identify an area for media to stage**
 - **Command personnel should anticipate crowds of parents/relatives and have crowd control/containment plan**

Entry Team Composition

- **First responder intervention will be based on opportunity and sufficient resources**
- **Can be three, four or five man teams**
 - **How many officers are on team is based on availability of resources, intelligence on suspect(s) and necessity of immediate response**
 - **Larger team is more effective and safer for responding officers**
- **Each Contact Team operates independently of other teams**

Entry Team Composition

- **Communicate using plain English, easy to understand terms (no 10 codes) – your team may be made up of officers from different jurisdictions**
- **May become containment team if assailants dynamic actions cease or becomes a barricaded subject**

Entry Team Composition

- **Teams will have identified team leader**
 - **Directs movement**
 - **Communications**
 - **Cover for entry officers**

Entry Team Composition

● **Entry Officer(s)**

- **Enters and clears rooms**
- **Engages threats if present in room**
- **Notifies team leader when clear and victim/civilian status**

Entry Team Composition

● Breacher

- Opens doors for entry officer(s)
- If door is locked and there is not indication of active assailant inside, bypass door
- If door is locked and there is active assailant inside, you **MUST** breach that door – get in that room somehow
- Can be additional entry officers in a five man team

Entry Team Composition

- Remember, assignment on team may change at any time due to a variety of factors, so officers must be familiar with each position and its responsibilities

3-Officer Element

- One COVER/REAR GUARD
- Two ENTRY



3-Officer Element – Closed Door Tactic

- **Entry 1 will hold on the closed door.**
- **Entry 2 will hold on the closed door.**
- **Cover/Rear Guard will be called up to breach the closed door. If needed, he can be called to assist in room clearing.**



4-Officer Element

- One COVER

- Two ENTRY

- One BREACH/REAR GUARD

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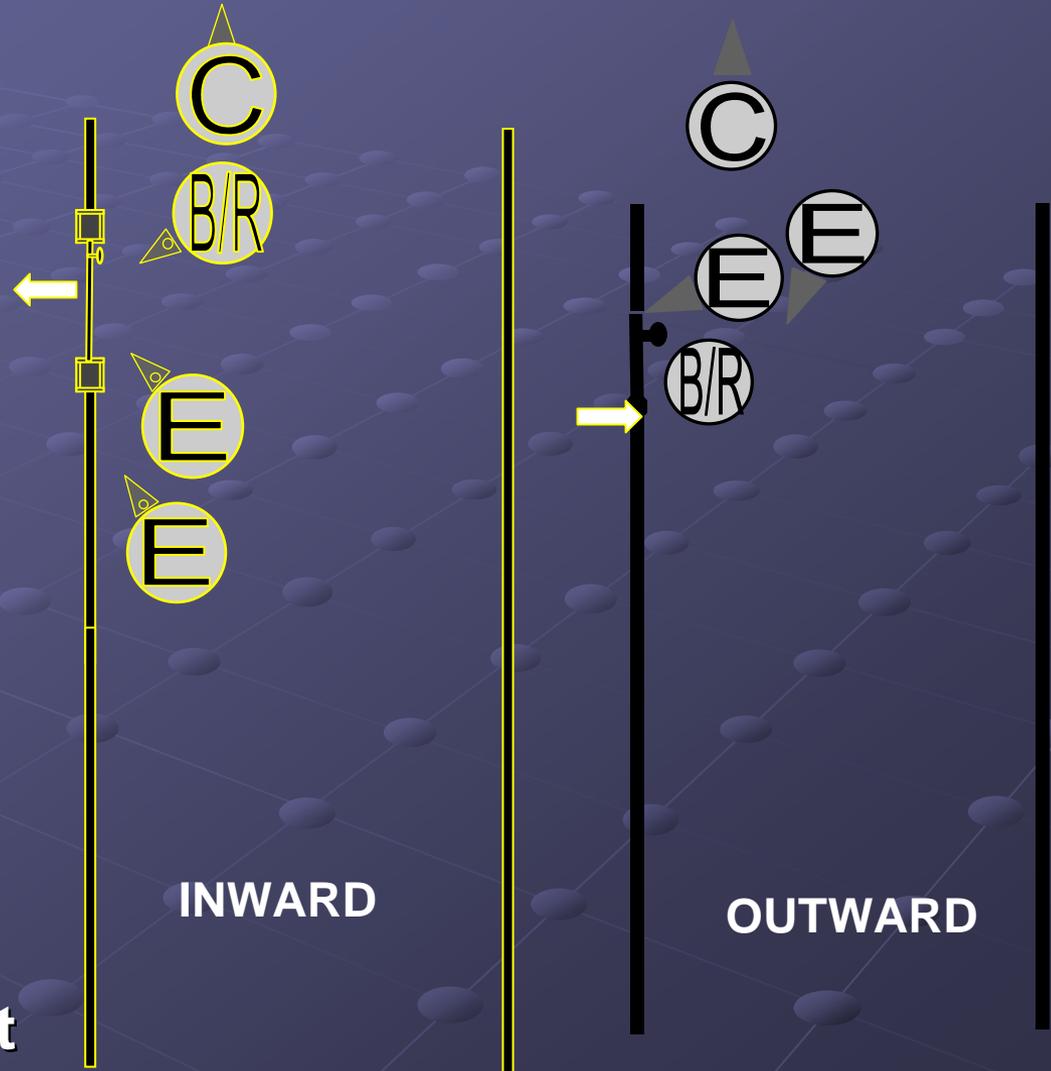
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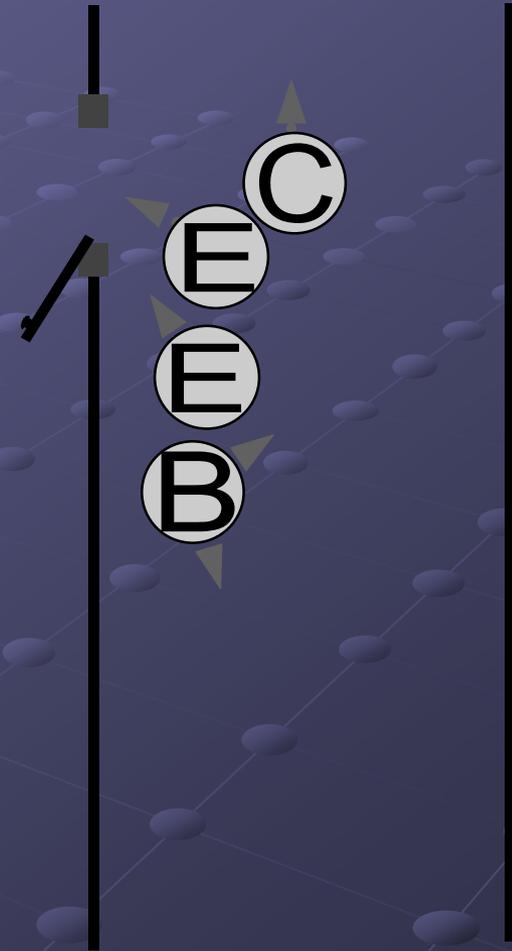
4-Officer – Closed Door Tactic

- Cover will pass the closed door
- Entry 1 will hold on the closed door
- Entry 2 will hold on the closed door
- Breach/Rear Guard will be called up to breach the closed door. If needed, he can be called to assist in room clearing



4-Officer Element–Open Door Tactic

- **Cover officer will flank either left or right, without exposing himself to the open door.**
- **Entry officer will enter the open door.**
- **Entry officer will enter the open door.**
- **Breach/Rear Guard**
Breach officer will act as rear guard. If needed, he can be called to assist in room clearing.



5-Officer Element

- One COVER
- Two ENTRY
- One BREACH
- One REAR GUARD

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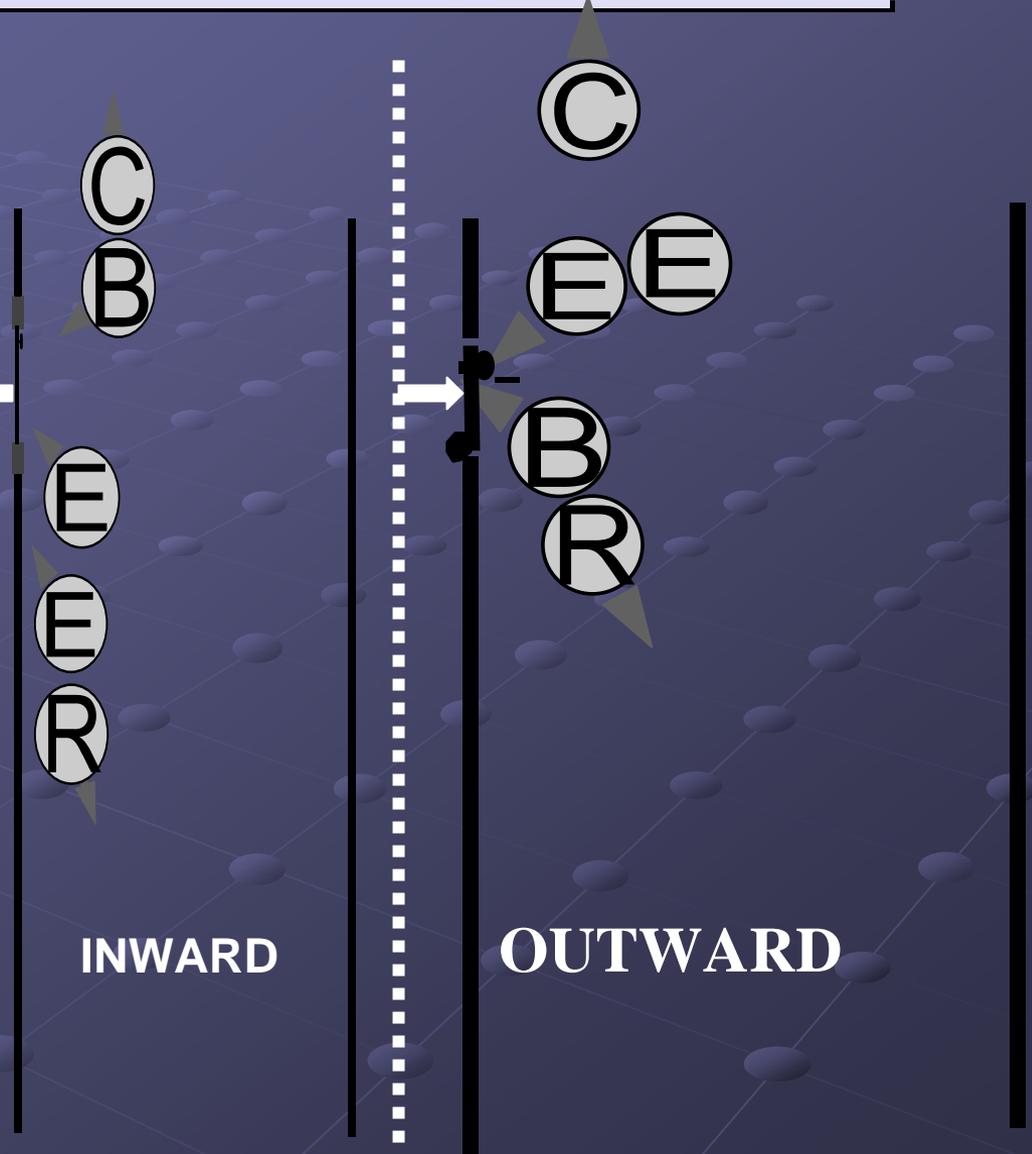
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5-Officer Element-Closed Door

- Cover officer will pass the closed door
- Entry officers will hold on the closed door
- Breach officer will be the 3rd entry officer into the room
- Rear guard will provide cover to the rear of the element



Tactical Considerations

● Things to expect

- Total pandemonium
- Frightened/confused victims who are not responsive to officers' direction (May grab onto officers)
- Difficult radio communications
- Fire alarm/sprinkler activation
- Suspicious packages/devices (IED)
- Carnage – possibly of very young children
- Armed citizens trying to “help”
- Off-duty/plainclothes officers

Off-duty Category III Officer Tactical Considerations

- **Contact 911 to initiate on-duty officer response**
 - **Stay on line for real-time intelligence**
- **If challenged by a uniformed officer, they are in charge. DO WHAT THEY SAY**
- **DO NOT JOIN ENTRY TEAM**
- **Be an excellent eye witness**

Contact Team Assessment

- **Communicate victim locations and conditions – prioritize**
- **Suspicious devices/Improvised Explosive Device (IED) types and locations**
- **Suspect location and description**

Team Leader should assure that team:

- Moves with 360 degree coverage
- Stops assailant(s)
- Limits movement of assailant(s)
- Prevents assailant(s) escape
- Continues past victims
- Continues past suspicious devices
Improvised Explosive when safe to do so

Theatres/Auditoriums/Warehouses

- Choose initial entry point(s) that provide the best overall view of the area, ideally from an elevated position
- Decide whether turning on overhead lights will be an advantage or disadvantage
- Recognize cross fire threat
- Don't overlook closets and storage areas

EMS Response

- **Responsibility of coordination with EMS falls to incident commander or designee**
- **Create staging/triage area in cooperation with EMS command**
 - **Consider proximity to assailant and available cover/concealment**
 - **May be inside a building/room relatively close to assailant**
 - **If extra protective equipment available, provide to EMS personnel**
 - **Law enforcement officer should be stationed in triage area for security – assailant(s) may try to flee by leaving with victims**

Ceasing Active Assailant Deployment

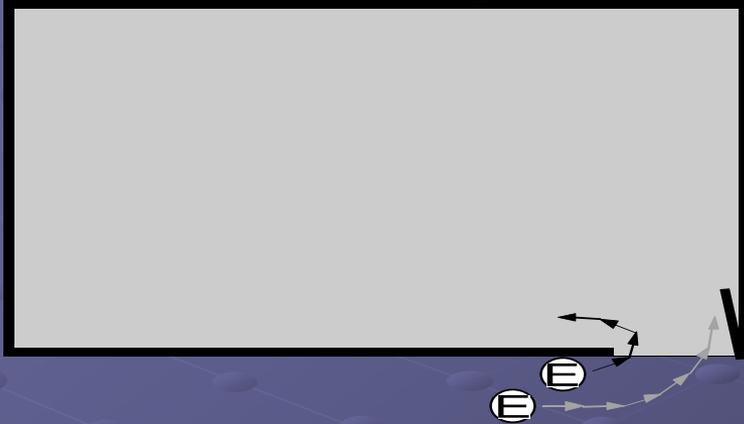
- **Reasons for stopping immediate intervention:**
 - Neutralization/capture of suspect
 - Becomes barricaded suspect
- **If suspect is taken into custody**
 - Secure suspect & take back to Rescue Team
 - Contact team starts building search
 - If there is another active assailant, leave one Contact Team member with suspect while remainder of team resumes search

Change over to building search

- If SWAT is on scene, they should take command of building clearing
- If first responders are clearing building, use established building clearing techniques
- Remember before, during and after the incident, the area is a crime scene – may be very large and needs to be secured for investigative units

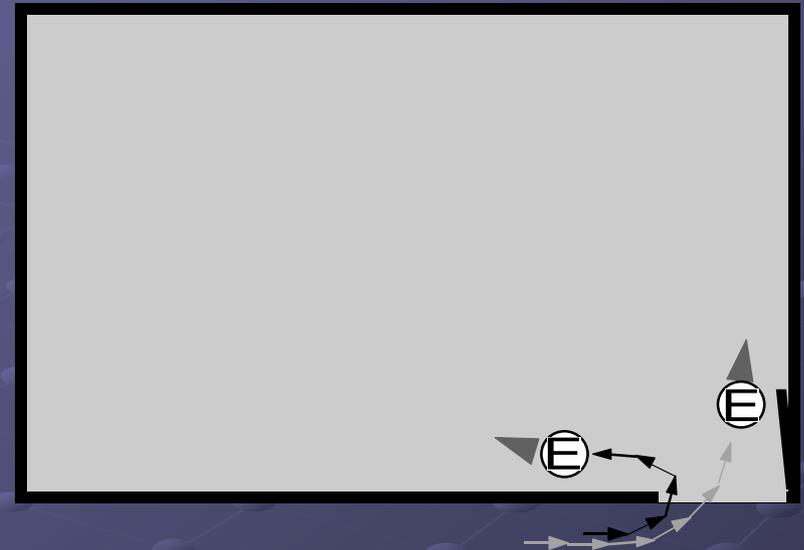
Room Clearing

- 2-Officer
- Areas of Responsibilities



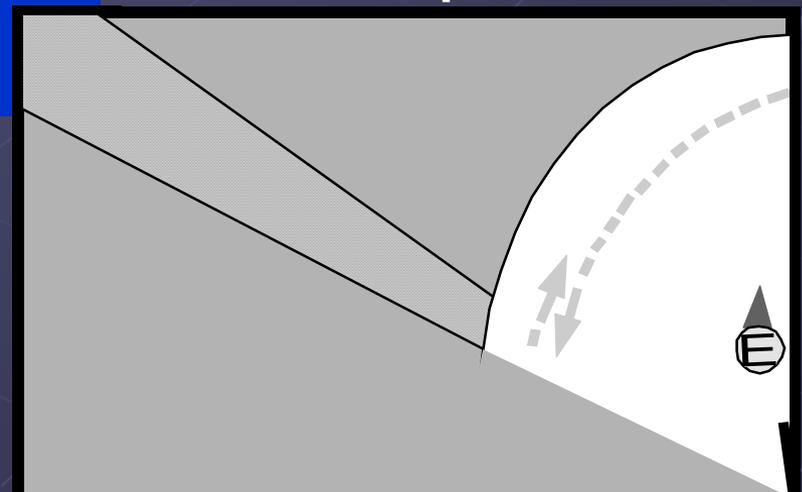
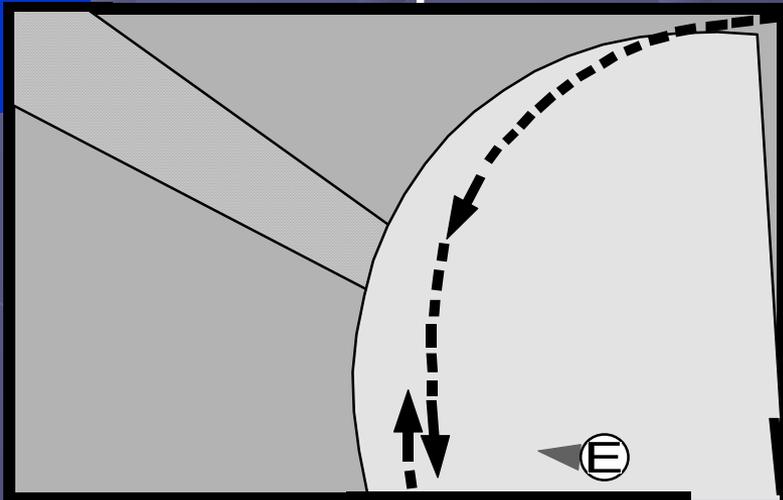
1st Officer

Areas of Responsibilities



2nd Officer

Areas of Responsibilities

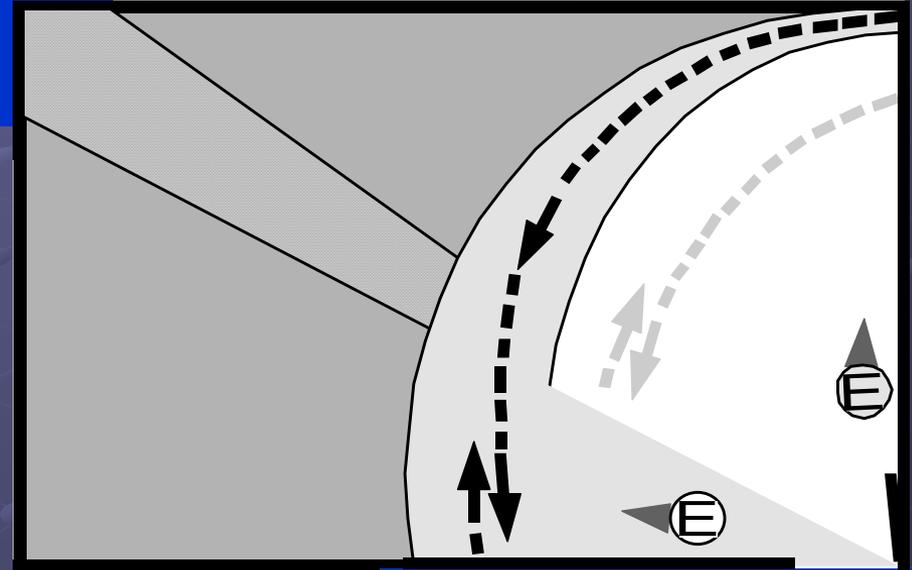


Room Clearing

2-Officer

Areas of responsibilities

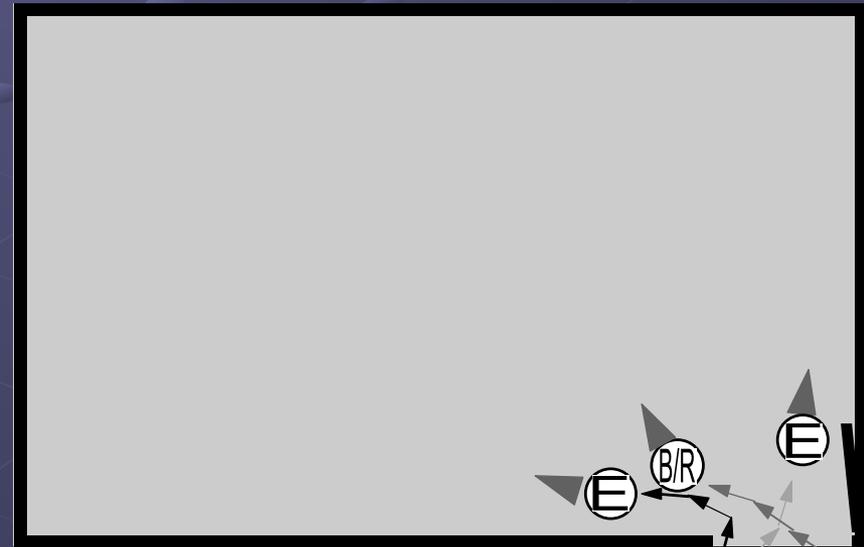
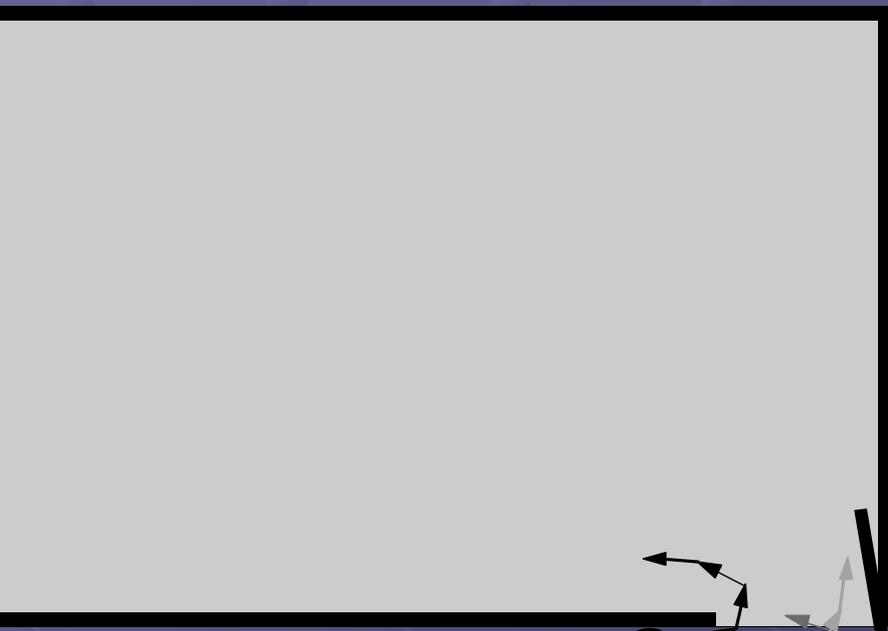
Overlapping



Room Clearing

3-Officer

Areas of Responsibilities



Summary

- **Suspect(s) begin to shoot at people without warning**
- **Active Assailants are likely to continue to use deadly physical force until intervention occurs or until the shooter decides to stop**
- **Active Assailant concept represents a shift in patrol response tactics, equipment needs, and command protocol**
- **These situations require the initial police responders arriving on the scene to have the authority and the capability to take action without waiting for command staff or for the arrival of specialty units**

Summary

- **If you witness an active assailant incident, call 911**
- **Stay on the line and provide Intel**
- **Be an excellent eye witness**
- **Follow all directions from uniformed staff**
- **Do not join the entry team**