


MELROSE POLICE DEPARTMENT		Department Manual: Policy No. 7.01
Active Shooter and Hostile Event Response (ASHER)		
MASSACHUSETTS POLICE ACCREDITATION STANDARDS REFERENCED: 46.1.10		GENERAL ORDER 19-003
Effective Date: April 20, 2019, Revised: February 27, 2023	Issuing Authority <i>Kevin Faller</i> Kevin Faller Chief of Police	

Massachusetts State Police Headquarters **508 820-2121**

Commonwealth's Fusion Center **978 451-3700**

Boston Regional Intelligence Center **617 343-5000**

FBI 24-7 On-Call Phone Number: **857 386-2000**

Everett Police Department	617-387-1212
Malden Police Department	781-397-7171
Medford Police Department	781-391-6404
Saugus Police Department	781-941-1101
Somerville Police Department	617-625-1212
Stoneham Police Department	781-438-1212
Wakefield Police Department	781-245-1212 Press "0"

I. General Considerations and Guidelines:

Police departments, public and private schools, hospitals, airports, military bases, court buildings, casinos, movie theaters, shopping centers, universities, nightclubs are all locations of recent active

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shooter/hostile event or mass casualty incidents. Assailants continue to pose a threat to all hard as well as soft targets. They may attack on any day of the week and at any time of the day.

Las Vegas, Washington D.C., Newtown, Orlando, San Bernardino, Fort Lauderdale, Clackamas County, Aurora, CO, Aurora, Ill, Thousand Oaks, CA, Pittsburg and Seattle are just some of the jurisdictions in which an Active Shooter-Hostile Event (ASHE) or Mass Casualty Incident (MCI) has occurred. These events can occur in small, medium or large municipalities. Population density is often a consideration among assailants; however, this does not always drive their nefarious motive. Vehicles, fire, knives, rifles and handguns are some of the weaponry involved in these extremely dynamic events. The events evolve rapidly and an assailant can have one or multiple types of weapons on his or her person. It is imperative that first responders plan and train for multiple weapon types for both singular as well as simultaneous, multi-site attacks. Given the complexity and wide range of possible scenarios, first responders need new resources, tools, education and training that emphasize an integrated and coordinated response to any ASHE/MCI involving Law Enforcement (federal, state, local), Fire, EMS, Communications, Mutual Aid, City Departments, Schools and other Community Stakeholders.

II. Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to provide protocols for assessing the threat and immediately responding during any active shooter-hostile event situations to limit serious injury and loss of life with the overall goal of increasing the survivability rate of all victims whenever possible. While the term “active shooter” is used throughout, this policy applies to all situations where there is an active assailant(s) or posing an ongoing deadly threat, to include, but not limited to, those from firearms, vehicles, explosives, and knives.

III. Policy: 46.1.10

It is the policy of this department in any active shooter-hostile event situations where ongoing deadly force is reasonably likely to be employed by a suspect(s)—and delay in taking law enforcement action could result in injury or death—that immediate action by officers at the scene is necessary when such actions are deemed reasonable to prevent further injuries or loss of life.

This directive shall provide guidance and direction to responding officers regarding appropriate response to an active shooter–hostile event (ASHE) including containment, arrest, and/or the use of deadly force, if necessary. Policy numbered **4.13 – *Use of Force*** applies to all actions taken in an ASHE situation. The goals of police intervention in an ASHE are to neutralize the threat(s), prevent access to potential victims, and assist with rescuing injured persons so that they can be taken to area hospitals without unreasonable delay. These goals can be achieved by various means, up to and including, the use of deadly force, if necessary.

IV. Glossary of Terms:

Active Shooter - The United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS) defines the active shooter as *“an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area; in most cases, active shooters use firearms(s) and there is no pattern or method to their selection of victims.”*

Active Shooter Hostile Event Response (ASHER) Plan - A comprehensive ASHER plan provides a framework for developing and implementing specific procedures including training and exercising your capability, equipping your response elements, proactive engagement of your stakeholders, and evaluating your capabilities. A collaborative planning process involving representatives of all responsible agencies and jurisdictions is necessary to set the stage for an effective ASHE response.

Casualty Collection Point (CCP) – A forward location where victims can be assembled for movement from areas of risk. Based upon incident dynamics, such as the number and location of victims, multiple CCPs may be required. CCP’s can be in warm zones.

Field Treatment Site is a location within a jurisdiction in close proximity to an ASHE site that is used for the assembly, triage (sorting), medical stabilization and subsequent evacuation of casualties. It may be used for the receipt of incoming medical resources (doctors, nurses, supplies, etc.) Preferably the site should be located in the protected and secured Cold Zone and should include or be adjacent to an open area suitable for use as a helicopter pad if necessary.

Contact Team (CT) – A law enforcement team, usually the first arriving officers, assigned to contain or eliminate the threat(s). Under certain circumstances a single officer entry may be warranted as in the case of an SRO on scene at a local school.

Cold Zone – Where there is no significant danger or threat can be reasonably anticipated. Determined by utilizing distance, geographic location or terrain with respect to the type of firepower or explosive potential, the Cold Zone is the appropriate location for the Incident Command Post, Treatment Areas, Staging and logistical functions of the incident.

- The Command Post / Staging / Logistics / Medical Treatment / Media and Reunification, while all located in the cold zone where it is safe, should be geographically separated, somewhat, to eliminate any possible confusion.

Warm Zone - Where a potential threat exists, but the threat is not direct or immediate. An area that has already been quickly searched and secured by law enforcement is considered to be a Warm Zone. The threat still exists elsewhere in the building or venue, but law enforcement has cleared and secured an area to which fire and EMS personnel may be brought in to render Life Saving Intervention to injured victims.

Hot Zone - Where a direct and immediate threat exists based on the complexity and circumstances of the incident as determined by law enforcement. An area within range of direct gunfire or explosive devices or an unsecured or unsearched area where a suspect could be hiding is

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considered to be a Hot Zone. The Hot Zone is an Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health zone. Law enforcement resources (Patrol Contact Teams, SWAT teams, TEMS Specialists) should be the only safety personnel operating in the Hot Zone.

Inner Perimeter - An area established to keep the threat contained to a specified location.

Outer Perimeter - An area established to keep the inner perimeter secured and to prevent outside elements from entering the incident.

Force Protection Group (FPG) – Law enforcement officers (two or more) assigned to protect rescue task force (fire and EMS) personnel.

Incident Command System - or ICS is a hierarchical approach to emergency response that fosters both management and coordination when multiple agencies are involved. It's important that ICS is built from the bottom-up as opposed to the top-down, as ICS oftentimes starts with the first responding unit on the scene until further response assets can arrive. Establishing ICS as soon as possible is critical because it fortifies coordination and leadership between various responders and agencies/disciplines.

Interior Operations – Any secure forward law enforcement position used to support tactical operations.

Mass Casualty Incident (MCI) – A multiple casualty incident where the number of injured patients exceeds or severely strains available local or regional EMS resources.

Rescue Task Force (RTF) – A team of at least two fire or EMS personnel equipped with medical equipment and ideally, two or more law enforcement personnel with weapons.

Site Orientation – Site Orientation should be kept as simple as possible. “Plain English” should be used whenever possible. Starting from the front of the location as the A side [Actual Street Address], which flows clockwise to the B, C and D sides.

Treatment Area (TA) – An area designated in the cold zone where patients from the CCP are moved for medical treatment. MCI operations are usually conducted in this area.

- Note: The CCP and Treatment Area are separate. The CCP is an evacuation point where casualties are evacuated from the hot zone to be transported to the Cold Zone Treatment Area. The Treatment Area is where casualties are removed to and are triaged and/or treated and ultimately transported to a hospital.

V. **Procedures:**

A. **Situational Assessment:**

- 1.) Based on available information, dispatched responders or officers already at the incident scene may verify that an active shooter-hostile event situation exists either through:
 - information provided by communications personnel;
 - from persons confined within or exiting the target location;
 - from witnesses;
 - by reports of, or sounds of, gunfire; or
 - through related means.
- 2.) When available and as time permits, witnesses, or others should be asked about the location and number of suspects, the suspects' weapons, persons injured, the number and location of persons in possible jeopardy, and the use or location of improvised explosive devices (IEDs).
- 3.) Upon completion of the initial rapid assessment, keeping in mind that time is of the essence, the first arriving officer(s) shall:
 - Advise Emergency Communications Personnel as to the status of the ASHE and request additional resources as deemed necessary.
 - The first responding units shall determine whether to take immediate action alone or with another officer or based on safety concerns wait until additional resources are available to form the initial Contact Team for initial entry.
 - The decision to wait for additional resources to form the initial Contact Team shall be made without *unnecessary delay* – always keeping in mind that rapid intervention will ultimately save lives. In some circumstances a single officer entry may be necessary as is when the officer is already on scene and the threat is immediate and certain.
 - Once a Contact Team is formed Officers shall enter in a tactical formation as the situation dictates as The Melrose Police have been training.
 - To minimize congestion on Melrose Channel 1 – whenever possible only One (1) Officer shall be designated as the “*radio*” or communications officer who shall upon entry into the building promptly relay all pertinent observations to the IC in terms of the possible location of the shooter(s) in the hot zone and the location of any injured individuals in the warm zone that were observed as they made their way to the shooter(s) location.
 - **Important Note:** Only after a contact team has been deployed, it is paramount that one of the initial responding officers remain outside the building in the cold zone as the designated Incident Commander until such time as he/she is relieved

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by an individual of higher rank or advanced expertise is coordinating the incident.

B. **Individual Officer Intervention:**

- (1) In some instances, an individual officer may be present within or near the active shooting location, such as a mall or school. Whether on or off duty, in uniform or civilian clothes, he or she may determine that immediate action is necessary and reasonable to stop the threat. That decision may take into consideration the officer's capability to effectively intervene based on his or her level of training and the necessary equipment that they have available.
- As soon as practical, officer(s) shall notify Emergency Communications that an active shooter-hostile event situation exists. The officer(s) should always provide the following information and timely updates as they become available:
 - a) the identity, location, manner of dress, and proposed actions of the officer(s) at the scene;
 - b) information about the suspect to include a physical description, weapons, equipment such as body armor, and current location and actions; and also
 - c) available information on any persons injured or under threat, their specific locations, additional emergency resources required, and recommended points of entry.
- (2) When displaying firearms while in plainclothes, officers shall when tactically feasible verbally identify themselves as law enforcement officers, and conspicuously display their chain badges and/or other law enforcement identification to alert security personnel, arriving officers, or civilians who may also be armed.
- (3) If officers are unarmed, they can still play a critical role in active shooter response through the following actions:
 - a) Facilitating evacuation by:
 - (1) locating points of egress and directing people to those evacuation points if reasonably safe for them to do so; and
 - (2) locating and directing persons hiding in unsecure locations (e.g., under desks, inside unlocked rooms) to designated evacuation points.
 - b) If evacuation is not possible:
 - (1) helping locate and direct persons to safer locations, preferably with thick walls and solid doors with locks; or, in the absence of such locations, rooms that can be barricaded with heavy furniture or objects;
 - (2) directing individuals to silence all personal electronic devices, take cover, and remain silent; and

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(3) taking any additional actions possible to distract, disrupt, divert, or incapacitate the suspect using surprise attacks and any aggressive force possible.

- c) When possible, assisting with the injured and directing incoming teams to injured persons.

C. Contact Team or Contact Officer Response:

- 1.) The mission of the Contact Team or Officer (contact team) is to quickly and safely locate, identify and stop the threat as soon as reasonably possible. Even if the threat seemingly has been terminated, contact officers or teams are required to render the location safe and secure the suspect(s). An additional Contact Team in the course of conducting a follow up shall assist in screening and the orderly evacuation of persons to a designated area, and locating any other persons who still may be in hiding.
- 2.) Additional officers or teams may be deployed at the direction of the Incident Commander (IC) to provide a tactical advantage or when there is more than one shooter. The IC should “if possible” ensure that each team is aware of the other officers’ or teams’ locations within the structure and their actions.
- 3.) The contact team shall be given priority to utilize communications on Melrose Channel 1 to supply the following types of crucial information:
 - a) The officer or team’s progress and location.
 - b) The specific location and number of victims and their medical needs.
 - c) The estimated number of suspects involved.
 - d) The suspect’s description and weapons if known.
 - e) The location of any booby traps or explosives. If discovered, the contact officer or team leader shall determine whether to post an officer near it, report it, or mark it for later removal.
- 4.) The contact team shall locate the suspect(s) in the most expeditious manner possible in order to stop the threat. In doing so, officers should not stop to render aid or assistance to victims, but may, where reasonably possible, inform them that Rescue Task Forces (RTFs) are forthcoming and direct them to a safe point of egress or hiding if they are ambulatory and it is deemed safe for them to do so.
- 5.) Whenever possible, the contact team should employ tactical advantages such as avoiding the use of the main entrance to provide an element of surprise and to bypass potential booby traps or ambush.
- 6.) The contact team should not attempt to conduct a thorough clearing of the location, but should follow sounds, such as gunfire, yelling, and screaming; observations of

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victims and bystanders; and related information to help locate the suspect(s) as soon as possible.

- 7.) Once the location of the suspect(s) is known and any immediate threat is eliminated/mitigated, the contact team should secure the suspect and triage any casualties in the immediate area. The follow on additional contact teams proceed to clear all portions of the location in the event that more suspects are in hiding. If victims are encountered who require immediate trauma care, the contact team should if feasible provide such care prior to continuing to clear the location or move to CCP. Arriving tactical or other officers should be called upon to help clear the location of potential suspects, locate and evacuate persons in hiding, and render safe any dangerous munitions or armament.
- 8.) The contact team shall switch its focus to providing trauma care as necessary when the primary mission is completed.

D. Rescue Task Force (RTFs) Police and Fire:

- 1.) Once the contact team(s) is/are deployed, and as additional officers and resources arrive at the incident scene, the IC should ensure that RTFs are formed to provide immediate trauma care and to help evacuate victims to the Casualty Collection Point located in the Cold Zone where the Ambulances are standing ready to transport injured victims to area hospitals.
 - Police must ensure that there are clear evacuation routes on the main roads to the hospitals.
- 2.) RTFs shall be organized under a designated team leader with that officer also serving as the radio (communications officer). The RTF shall deploy in tactical formations - consistent with department training - providing the necessary force protection for the RTF Firefighters who shall be equipped with Tactical Emergency Casualty Care (TECC) bags containing tourniquets, occlusive dressings, and portable nylon stretcher.
- 3.) RTFs shall be deployed only after the contact team has made entry, provided a status report, notified the command post of the location of victims, established the designated warm zone(s), and determined that rescue efforts may begin.
- 4.) Wounded and injured persons shall be quickly searched, if reasonable, for weapons, quickly treated for obvious life-threatening injuries and removed to the designated CCPs with cover provided by the police and movement of such persons provided by the Firefighter RTF members. If emergency medical personnel are not yet in place, basic trauma care shall be the responsibility of RTF members until they are relieved by medical personnel of a higher standard of care/training (e.g., paramedics).

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- 5.) Rescue and recovery operations shall continue until the IC has declared the scene clear and safe.

E. Unified Command:

- 1.) Unified Incident Command shall be established as soon as possible after the initiation of the incident consisting of Police, Fire, EMS, Communications and other designated stakeholders of importance.
- 2.) The IC shall ensure that the following actions are accomplished:
 - a) Organize and establish unified interagency communication(s) pursuant to a predetermined communications plan.
 - b) Establish an inner perimeter to control access to and egress from the area of risk.
 - c) Establish an outer perimeter.
 - a. Media personnel shall be staged within a designated area in the outer perimeter outside the range of any gunfire.
 - d) Establish staging areas in the cold zone for the following purposes and notify Emergency Communications of their locations:
 - (i) for responding officers and other emergency personnel (An officer should be assigned to this staging area to brief arriving personnel, maintain communication with the contact team, and assign duties as directed by the IC.);
 - (ii) for treatment of the injured and evacuation by EMS or medevac;
 - (iii) where individuals without injuries should be directed for identification and debriefing (evacuation area);
 - (iv) to accommodate arriving family members of persons at the incident scene (Designation of a Notification Center away from the scene); and
 - (v) for the media. (This area should be staffed with appropriate personnel, such as public information officers.)
 - e) Ensure that officers assigned to the **Notification Center** maintain custody and control of all persons and document their identities until they can be reunited with family or others. Victims and witnesses suffering from emotional and/or physical trauma or shock should be kept under the observation of medical personnel until such time as they may be safely transported to an area hospital or home in the care of family or friends.
 - f) Request **mutual aid** from surrounding local agencies, MSP, and the FBI.
 - g) Establish **traffic control and management** for the ingress and egress of public safety vehicles. Special consideration should be given to **maintain open routes for rapid transport of the injured.**

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- h) Contact appropriate **aviation resources** (MSP) to control air space for possible medical evacuation resources and to establish restricted air space for law enforcement use only.
 - i) Request emergency medical assistance.
 - j) Initiate intelligence gathering on possible suspects (BRIC, MSP Fusion Center, & FBI).
 - k) Summon designated chaplains and peer support personnel to provide information to relatives of victims. {FBI Peer Support Team}
 - l) Coordinate with owners or officials of the target location for floor plans; site layout; and a roster, including emergency contact information as available, of employees, students, residents, visitors, or others believed to be on-site.
 - m) Assign a **recorder** to document actions at the command post.
- 3.) When available on the scene, a tactical team may be assigned as appropriate to:
- a) contain the location (during the second operational phase > 15minutes)
 - b) assist the RTFs,
 - c) help locate the suspect(s) or relieve the contact team if applicable,
 - d) help locate and safeguard explosives (IEDs) pending removal, and
 - e) to provide special weapons and equipment as needed and directed by the IC.
- 4.) Additional officers shall be deployed to control access to the location and monitor the outside perimeter with specific attention to managing traffic around the incident scene.

F. Community Notification:

The PIO or other designated individual(s) including the Police Chief shall be responsible for ensuring appropriate information is distributed in a timely manner to the community (e.g., Twitter and traditional media sources).

This may include:

- a) shelter in place warnings for nearby locations during active shooter situations;
- b) alerts to avoid the area due to heavy law enforcement activity and potential road closures; and
- c) to provide an update in terms of the number of casualties (injured and deceased), status of shooter(s) and a general description of what occurred and where.

G. Debriefing:

As soon as reasonably possible after the incident, the agency shall conduct a debriefing of essential personnel involved in the incident. The debriefing shall identify areas of potential improvement and determine whether changes in operational protocols, policy, or training may be warranted.

H. Training:

This agency shall provide active shooter-hostile event response training to all sworn personnel along with firefighters, EMS and emergency communications personnel, including tabletops and simulation exercises conducted in Melrose schools and other high-profile facilities.

Quick Reference Guide

Establish a Unified Command Post Location: (“UCP”) [PD-FD-EMS]

- Follow NIMS - Incident Command System (ICS) Model
 - Call over the air on Channel 1 – “Identify yourself, state location, establish Command”
 - Set up Initial Unified Command Post in safe location Cold Zone (e.g., Cruiser away from threat)
 - Immediately Deploy Ballistic Vest / Kevlar Helmet / Patrol Rifle (if Certified) – Located in Trunk
- **Identify Three (3) Pertinent Zones: (Hot, Warm, Cold)**
 - Hot – Where a direct and immediate threat exists based on the complexity and circumstances of the incident as determined by law enforcement.
 - Warm – Where a potential threat exists, but the threat does not appear to be direct or immediate.
 - Often times seriously injured victims are found in the Warm Zone.
 - Cold - Where no significant danger or threat can be reasonably anticipated: “UCP”
- **Specific Command Objectives:**
 - Identify, Locate, Engage, & Eliminate Threat [Shooter(s)]
 - Establish Initial Contact Team [PD]: Rolling “T” and/or Diamond formation
 - CT: Report casualties; update the Hot and Warm Zones to UCP Rear
 - CT: Report to UCP areas within the structure that are suitable for rescue efforts
 - Establish Evacuation Corridors for EMS [PD] for clear access to Hospital(s)
Establish Rescue Task Force Team(s) [RTF = PD+FD]
 - PD Provide Force Protection for FD w/TECC *Casualty Collection Point (“CCP”)*
 - Initial Treatment & Rapid Evacuation of Injured Victims in the Warm Zone(s)
 - As Additional Unit Arrive on Scene Form up additional Contact Teams and RTFs
 - Higher Ranking Officials shall ASSUME COMMAND and Announce OVER THE AIR.
 - Designate a Staging Area for Additional Personnel Resources

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- Select a Staging Area Manager to manage Staging Area.
- **Establish Emergency Communications:**
 - Police Department – USE assigned PD Channel 1:
 - **Emergency Communications > Command/Control > Central District (BAPERN)**
 - for Multi-site attacks See Alternative Communications Plan using **BAPERN Channels**
 - **North Tactical BAPERN – Jurisdiction 1 (for a separate attack location II)**
 - **Area-wide 4 BAPERN – Jurisdiction 2 (for a separate attack location III)**
 - **Fire/EMS** – Use assigned FD Channel
 - Establish a Family Assistance Center & 1-800 Toll Free Number (FBI to Assist)
 - **FBI** 24-7 On-Call Phone Number: **(857) 386-2000**