



ACTIVE-SHOOTER AWARENESS: RELEVANT AND ON POINT

By Mr. James M. Kirkland

The Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, Plans, and Training (G-3/5/7), U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), hosted the annual TRADOC Force Protection (FP) Workshop at Newport News, Virginia, 29–31 March 2011. This was the sixth TRADOC FP workshop conducted by the Command Provost Marshal Directorate, TRADOC. More than 100 FP professionals from brigade level and above attended the 3-day event.

The theme of the train-the-trainer workshop, which featured an interactive seminar for experts, was “Active-Shooter Awareness: Relevant and On Point.” The training sessions addressed active-shooter¹ awareness—emphasizing the recognition of potential indicators of violent behavior—and workforce response (including the possible prevention of an active-shooter incident). A discussion and practical examples of the best methods for surviving an active-shooter attack were also presented. The objective of the workshop was to equip attendees with the knowledge and resources necessary to return to their units and train the workforce on appropriate considerations regarding active-shooter situations.

Mr. Joe Gallagher, the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and Plans (G-3/5), TRADOC, opened the workshop by sharing his concerns regarding the number of active-shooter incidents that have taken place in recent years and by emphasizing the urgency of training Soldiers, families, and the workforce in the areas of awareness, prevention, and response. He encouraged attendees to reach out to each other and develop new friendships, as well as professional working relationships, and to

return to their units trained and prepared to serve as competent and confident security professionals.

Chief David Ross, chief of police at Fort Hood, Texas, served as the keynote speaker. Chief Ross presented some lessons learned from the tragic shooting incident that took place at Fort Hood on 5 November 2009, when a lone gunman fired more than 100 bullets at Soldiers and civilians, murdering 13 people and injuring another 32. In the past, law enforcement response to a shooting situation consisted of containing the situation, negotiating it to a resolution, and—if all else failed—entering the site with a specialized team such as a special-reaction team or special weapons and tactics team. More recently, though, first responders have been instructed to move directly to the site of the gunfire and to stop the threat as quickly as possible in order to save lives and minimize injuries. While the U.S. Secret Service reports that the average duration of an active-shooter situation is 6 minutes, Chief Ross indicated that a total of 14 minutes 16 seconds elapsed from the time the Fort Hood assailant fired the first shot until he was subdued and the threat was brought under control by responding Department of Defense (DOD) police officers. According to Chief Ross, it was the courage of the Fort Hood police—and the active-shooter response training they had received—that enabled them to move directly toward the gunman, stop the threat, and prevent additional murdered or injured citizens.

On the first day of the workshop, Ms. Sherri Mikkelsen—senior crime/threat analyst with the Command Provost

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Marshal Directorate—presented a threat briefing. According to Ms. Mikkelsen, TRADOC is considering the best way to address the threat within the larger doctrinal principle of protection as well as the implications of an all-hazards threat approach.

Lieutenant Colonel Donnie Yates, chief of the TRADOC Operations Center, provided an update on reporting procedures outlined in TRADOC Regulation 1-8, *U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command Operations Reporting*.² These reporting procedures are consistent with procedures for military police reporting, serious-incident reporting, and the reporting prescribed in the “TRADOC Force Protection Operations Order,”³ which amplifies the reporting requirements (such as Operational Reporting [OPREP]-3)⁴ described in U.S. Army North Operations Order 20080108, *Force Protection*.⁵ The TRADOC Operations Center, which is manned 24 hours per day, disseminates information and reports to Headquarters, Department of the Army (DA), and Army North on behalf of former TRADOC installations where 24-hour, higher-headquarters reporting is not available.

Mr. Eric Dockter, chief of the Threat Analysis Branch, U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command (commonly referred to as “CID”), and Mr. James Wheadon, criminal intelligence specialist with CID, presented a workshop on eGuardian, which is a Federal Bureau of Investigation reporting system that has been adopted as a DOD-wide law enforcement system for submitting and disseminating information about suspicious activities. The eGuardian system consists of a centralized database where law enforcement personnel may report, query, analyze, and track data to share information regarding suspicious activity, potential terrorist threats, and terrorist events with other agencies. FP experts must establish and sustain proactive working relationships with law enforcement agencies to optimize the current eGuardian system. (See page 42 for more on eGuardian.)

Ms. Niki Anderson, founder and president of a privately owned company that deals with antiterrorism (AT) issues, presented a highly energetic, exceptionally informative analysis of the 2008 terrorist attacks in Mumbai, India, that left 170 dead and more than 300 injured. Her presentation focused on threats and tactics used against “soft” targets such as train stations, hotels, and other densely populated public facilities. The observations and lessons learned provided a list of items to be incorporated into FP plans to deter, detect, and defeat similar multiple, nearly simultaneous attacks.

Mr. Jon Moilanen, a senior military analyst assigned to the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command Intelligence Support Activity (TRISA), spoke on the topic of “Active-Shooter Awareness: Understanding the Full Spectrum Threat.” His presentation covered threat indicators for the risk management of active-shooting incidents, considerations for immediate or deliberate FP response in crisis, perspectives on lone and group active-shooter vignettes (including historical examples), and training resources available from TRISA.

The second day of the workshop consisted of 8 hours of active-shooter awareness, response, and recovery training, which was conducted by one of the world’s leading providers of customized safety and security training, high-level consultation, and specialized technology solutions. Instructors emphasized that active-shooter incidents are dynamic and unpredictable and that immediate and effective responses can be the difference between survival and death. The company promotes the reactions of *get out*, *hide out*, and *take out*—and combinations thereof. These reactions are similar to the *evacuate*, *lock down*, and *attack the shooter* reactions promoted by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Analyses of historical active-shooter events indicate that personnel who have been trained know how to react immediately; those who have not been trained tend to freeze, making them more susceptible to harm by the shooter. The active-shooter awareness, response, and recovery training was supplemented by an informative workbook, an active-shooter planning guide for training exercises, and information on contingency planning for FP. In addition, attendees received two excellent digital video disc (DVD) training aids (entitled “Shots Fired” and “Flashpoint”).

Mr. Dave Reed, chief of the Law Enforcement Operations Branch, U.S. Army Military Police School (USAMPS), delivered a presentation entitled “Active-Shooter Response: Law Enforcement Training Perspective.” Attendees included law enforcement personnel from installation departments of emergency services. Most of the attendees (who have a wide range of skills and hold a wide variety of jobs) had been assigned the additional duty of serving as AT officers for training brigades and TRADOC schools, and many had also been appointed to serve as physical security officers or operations security officers. An understanding of law enforcement response assists AT officers in training unit personnel to take appropriate action when police arrive on the scene. According to Mr. Reed, an independent review of the Fort Hood shooting incident

indicated that active-shooter response training and procedures should be updated to reflect best practices and the most current training techniques. In an 18 August 2010 memorandum, the Secretary of Defense adopted this recommendation and numerous other specific improvements.⁶ However, USAMPS had already incorporated the changes and improvements into a revised training support package by the time the Secretary of Defense memorandum was released. Mr. Reed concluded his presentation with a very emotional story about Ms. Emily Keyes, a 16-year-old who was held captive and, ultimately, shot and killed by a lone gunman at Platte Canyon High School, Bailey, Colorado, on 27 September 2006. During the time she was held hostage, Emily sent text messages to her parents, stating, "I love u guys." Following the incident, the "I Love U Guys" Foundation was established in an effort to restore and protect the joy of youth through positive actions and educational programs conducted in collaboration with families, schools, organizations, communities, and government entities. The foundation Web site is located at <<http://www.iloveuguy.org>>.

Security considerations for construction projects were of particular interest to workshop participants—especially to AT officers and physical security officers. Mr. Cleo Mackey, a TRADOC physical security officer, and a TRADOC team of engineers consisting of Mr. John Brown, Mr. Dan Sommer, Mr. John Willoughby, and Mr. Ron Hallett spoke about "Security Concerns in MILCON [Military Construction] and Other Construction Projects." The presentation offered a methodology for the consideration of critical security requirements (which should be addressed early in the planning process and monitored closely throughout construction) and any potential changes in security factors. It is much more expensive to add security features late in the process than it is to incorporate security requirements throughout the planning and construction phases.

According to an online survey, one of the most favored and useful presentations was that of Chaplain (Major) William Wehlage, Director of Operations, U.S. Army Chaplain Center and School, who provided a briefing on the after action review, lessons learned, and best practices obtained from a recent unit active-shooter training exercise. Chaplain Wehlage opened by remarking, "As I began to prepare for this [presentation], I referred to my most favorite force protection reference;" and with that, he raised his Bible for all to see. He then read from 1 Peter 5:8, which states, "Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour."⁷ This scripture selection sums up the current threat and addresses the fundamentals of deterring and preventing an attack. Chaplain Wehlage reminded workshop attendees that there are enemies who seek the capability to defeat U.S. programs and ideals and who have the resolve to do so.

One of the highlights of the workshop was the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers display booth. Participants had the opportunity to visit the display, obtain reference materials and DVDs,

and establish expert points of contact. The Headquarters, DA, AT Awareness Booth was also on display. Attendees could test their understanding of AT by interacting with the computer-based AT Knowledge Challenge. Brochures, references, and other AT awareness products for use at parent installations, activities, and units were also available at the AT Awareness Booth. Units can request the use of the booth for Army or command level conferences, workshops, and meetings by contacting Mr. Dan Herold, AT Branch, Office of the Provost Marshal General, at (703) 697-7257 or <daniel.j.herold@conus.army.mil>.

All workshop briefing slides are available from the TRADOC AT Community through the Army Knowledge Online (AKO) Web site. Membership and access to this restricted community may be requested at <<https://www.us.army.mil/suite/group/98357>>.

Endnotes:

¹According to USAMPS, an active-shooter incident occurs when "one or more subjects participate in a shooting spree, random or systematic, with intent to continuously harm others." (Training Support Package 191-AS-001, *Active-Shooter Response*, 19 March 2010.)

²TRADOC Regulation 1-8, *U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command Operations Reporting*, 16 November 2010.

³"TRADOC Force Protection Operations Order," 10 February 2009.

⁴An OPREP-3 report is an incident report that should be submitted by the lowest-level command that has knowledge of the event.

⁵U.S. Army North Operations Order 20080108, *Force Protection*, 13 February 2008.

⁶"Final Recommendations of the Ft. Hood Follow-on Review," memorandum from the Secretary of Defense, U.S. Department of Defense, 18 August 2010.

⁷*The Holy Bible*, New International Version, Biblica, 1984.



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