

Chapter 11

Law Enforcement's Response to Mass Shootings and Multiple Victim Violence

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ABSTRACT

This chapter addresses various methods used by law enforcement to examine mass shootings. It reviews the fact that there is not one consistent definition of mass shootings, and that lacking this definition it makes it a true challenge to identify events that are mass shootings for assessment and analysis. It further discusses the fact that the inability to consistently obtain, assess, analyze, and glean necessary information leading to the understanding of the mindset of mass murders results from the lack of a clear and totally accepted definition of mass shootings. The chapter specifically discusses and examines several methods used by law enforcement in their attempt to prevent and respond to mass shootings. The chapter also provides an understanding that law enforcement must rely on a multiplicity of entities to assist them in trying to prevent and responding to mass shootings to include everyday citizens.

INTRODUCTION

The following chapter seeks to address and explain how the use of a very wide spectrum of various techniques by law enforcement has changed over time to more in an attempt to successfully address the critical aspects of one of the most horrific crimes visited upon our society in decades, which are mass shootings. The chapter will explain how one of the most difficult issues today in addressing mass shootings for law enforcement is the fact that there is not a definition of mass shooting which is accepted, agreed upon or used by governmental and non-governmental agencies or entities involved in assessing and addressing various aspects of mass shootings.

The chapter will provide a brief history of mass shootings and then identify and discuss the most commonly used definition of mass shooting and the fact that the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) created this definition and encourages other agencies and entities to use it; however, congress and private

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-6684-7464-8.ch011

entities do not use this same definition. The chapter will address the importance of all of the entities using the same definition and how the difference could mean the loss of valuable data or not using collected data which could be influential in the understanding of the why mass shooters do what they do and identifying signs that could be used for prevention.

The chapter will address some of the existing ways in which law enforcement is using techniques for prevention, detection, addressing and assessing mass shootings and how the United States Department of Education and Department of Homeland Security have come together regarding mass shootings and have provided sequential steps that should be followed in attempting to address a mass shooting incident.

The chapter will address the issue of what happens when examining mass shootings, and how it truly it becomes obvious that one of the man intentions and focuses of the perpetrator(s) is to create, by their deadly, ruthless and cold but calculating actions, a large number of victims when their actions, senseless to society, but meaningful to them, is complete. The chapter will explain that because mass shootings are horrific, and why, through the assistance of mass media, they catch the attention of just about everyone in our society when they occur no matter how far away, they may be geographically.

There will be a discussion as to the importance of understanding the psychological aspects of a mass shooter and how the media provides them with a blueprint for mentally processing what previous mass shooters have processed and a how to do a mass shooting by publishing every single aspect of a mass shooting from the perspective and actions of the various mass shooters in the past.

The chapter will address the meaning placed upon what appear to be nothing but acts of senseless violence by those not involved or trained and experienced in the area of mass shootings. It will discuss how the main focus of a mass shooter in a mass shooting situation mainly focus on creating multiple victims from the deadly violence used by the perpetrators and most of the time the victims are not directly related to the perpetrator and are just victims by happenstance; thus allowing for just about anyone in society at any time to become the next victim of a mass murderer.

This chapter will discuss how mass shootings is developing into one of the most dynamic and critically challenging issues facing law enforcement today with its complex and dangerously unfolding actions in one of the most sensitive and vulnerable environments which is within locations where individuals are gathered in vulnerable positions and are unsuspecting of the dangers that can be visited upon them in an instant.

This chapter will provide an understanding of the fact that the result of these types of actions manifest themselves in not only injury and death of the victims at the specific locations such as schools, business, movie theatres, and other places where large crowds of people gather to observe or attend events where their focus is and should be on the performances or issues being presented to them. In a serious effort to create and maintain a truly safe and less dangerous environment for anyone attending events and especially in schools where there are unsuspecting students, teachers and administrators the use of manipulating and using the environment and various methods of law enforcement prevention and response has been explored and examined and needs to be continually explored and examined. Every issue that needs a solution has a major challenge and mass shootings is no different in that respect and addressing the first and most important challenge is critical to understanding and developing a plan to do what is possible to address the issue of mass shootings is developing an accepted definition of a mass shooting.

The chapter will finally explain that today, and with mass shootings beginning in the mind of the mass shooter, law enforcement is not fully prepared to prevent and address mass shootings. One of the ways law enforcement is addressing mass shootings is to inform and educate the public on how to recognize signs of a person who may become a mass shooter, how to act and what to do during a mass shooting

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