

# HONOLULU POLICE DEPARTMENT

## POLICY LAW ENFORCEMENT OPERATIONS

October 1, 2018

Policy Number 4.66

### ACTIVE THREAT INCIDENTS

#### POLICY

The Honolulu Police Department acts expeditiously to resolve active threat incidents in accordance with this directive to reduce the risk of death or serious bodily injury.

#### PROCEDURE

##### I. CONCEPTS OF OPERATION

- A. Active threat incidents are unique because an effective response cannot be entirely addressed by specific procedures.
- B. Concepts in this directive are not meant to limit conventional police tactics that are appropriate for crisis situations. Instead, the guidelines afford officers an option to intervene under higher risks, to increase the potential for saving lives, or to prevent further loss of lives. This policy also allows officers arriving at the scene of an active threat incident to intervene prior to the arrival or approval of supervisory personnel or specialized units.

##### II. DEFINITIONS

- A. Active threat: Any incident where an assailant(s) is engaged in killing or attempting to kill people with firearms (i.e., active shooter), vehicles, explosives, knives, or other deadly weapons in a confined and/or populated area and it appears that such violent actions will not stop without immediate and direct police intervention.

- B. Barricade incident: The unlawful denial of access to an area by an individual who threatens harm to his or her person or those seeking entry.
- C. Casualty Collection Point (CCP): A forward location where victims can be assembled for movement.
- D. Contact team: A team of two to five officers with the primary objective of initiating a search for the active threat and stopping the threat.
- E. Hostage incident: The unlawful restraint of a person under threat of death or serious injury.
- F. Incident Commander (IC): The law enforcement officer or supervisor responsible for all incident activities, including the development of strategies and tactics and the ordering and release of resources. The IC has overall authority for conducting and managing all operations at the incident site.
- G. Inner perimeter: The outer limits of the area around the incident site in which officers and others are vulnerable to direct fire or other direct attack.
- H. Outer perimeter: The outer limits of the area around the inner perimeter that is to be cleared of all nonessential personnel during the incident.
- I. Rescue Task Force (RTF): A team consisting of fire/emergency medical services (EMS) personnel paired with and protected by officers.
- J. Rescue team: A team of officers responsible for entering an active threat incident area to evacuate persons in jeopardy, including those who may be injured, and to provide safety and medical assistance.

- K. Staging area: A location of minimal threat to personal health and safety where resources can be held.
- L. Sniper incident: The unlawful use of a firearm from a concealed position to threaten or endanger others.
- M. Unified Command (UC): Lead by the IC, this group consists of law enforcement, fire, EMS supervisors, and other agencies working together at a central location to mitigate the threat, coordinate resources, and manage the incident.

III. PRIORITIES

When addressing an active threat incident, first responders shall prioritize their actions in this order:

- 1. Neutralize the threat;
- 2. Provide trauma care to the injured; and
- 3. Evacuate the casualties from the scene to a hospital or trauma care center.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. Initial Report of an Active Threat Incident

When an active threat-type incident is reported, the Communications Division shall:

- 1. Obtain all necessary information about the incident as outlined in their divisional manual of operations; and
- 2. Dispatch the field lieutenant and sergeant and all available beat officers to the scene. Personnel at the scene may request additional units.

B. First Officer(s) Responding to the Scene

The first officer(s) at the scene shall:

1. Quickly determine if the situation is an active threat incident;
2. Inform the Communications Division of the active threat incident and update the division with pertinent information as practicable. Such information may include (but not be limited to) the specific location of the incident, the description and actions of the suspect(s), weapons involved, victim injuries, etc.; and
3. Consider actionable intelligence, the likelihood of success, and the safety of innocent bystanders and officers to decide if an immediate response is likely to be successful or a contact team is required to stop the threat. See Section E below, Intervention Efforts.

C. Upon Confirmation of an Active Threat Incident

The Communications Division shall:

1. Immediately notify and request that the Honolulu Emergency Services Department (HESD) and the Honolulu Fire Department (HFD) respond to the staging area;
2. Immediately notify the commanders of the Specialized Services Division (SSD), Criminal Investigation Division (CID), and Telecommunications Systems Section (TSS);
3. Notify the bureau chief and district commander responsible for the area where the incident occurs;
4. Notify the department's media liaison and coordinate with her in notifying the public via the City and County of Honolulu online notification system; and
5. Initiate a running log.

D. Supervisor

1. Supervisors and other command personnel enroute to the incident shall monitor their radios but should refrain from intervening with on-scene efforts to resolve the active threat incident. In the absence of a supervisor and only after contact teams have been deployed, the senior officer may designate an officer to be the IC until relieved by a supervisor.
2. Upon arrival at the scene, a supervisor shall be the IC for the active threat incident.

E. Intervention Efforts

1. Officer(s) or contact team(s)

The following intervention efforts should be taken by the first officer(s) or contact team(s):

- a. Upon entering the location of the suspect(s), officers shall act upon an opportunity to stop the threat. Officers may adapt a tactical approach (e.g., withdraw or reposition) when faced with firepower, environment, or other factors that present unreasonable risks and/or greatly reduce the likelihood of success;
- b. Based on actionable intelligence and on-scene information, officers shall move in an expeditious manner to locate the suspect(s);
- c. Radio communications priority shall be given to on-scene officers;
- d. On-scene officers shall provide updates on:
  - (1) The estimated number of suspects, including their descriptions and weapons being used;
  - (2) Officers' progress and location;  
and

- (3) The location and number of victims and their medical needs;
  - e. After the initial threat is neutralized and there is no actionable intelligence that additional suspects are active, officers should begin to treat victims who require immediate trauma care prior to clearing the location;
  - f. Active threat situations are dynamic and can evolve rapidly. An active threat situation can change to a barricade, hostage, or sniper incident and back to an active threat. Officers should adjust their tactics accordingly. Refer to Policy 4.48, BARRICADE, HOSTAGE, AND SNIPER INCIDENTS; and
  - g. Any force option or tactic used in resolving an active threat incident should comply with departmental policies and procedures.
2. IC
- a. Based on an assessment of the situation, the IC shall:
    - (1) Update the Communications Division;
    - (2) Establish a UC area;
    - (3) Set up an inner perimeter;
    - (4) Designate a staging area;
    - (5) When possible, assign an officer to manage the staging area; and
    - (6) Start a running log.
  - b. The IC, HESD/EMS, and HFD commanders will coordinate resources to quickly provide medical care and expedite casualty evacuation.

- c. The IC shall form and deploy additional contact teams, rescue teams, and/or RTFs as necessary.

F. Rescue Efforts

1. Once contact teams are deployed, all other responding officers shall report to the staging area and refrain from self-deploying.
2. As officers and resources arrive at the staging area, the IC should ensure that RTFs are formed to provide trauma care and help evacuate victims.
3. If HFD and EMS personnel are not available to form RTFs, rescue teams should be deployed instead.
4. The RTFs shall be deployed after the initial threat has been neutralized and isolated.
5. Officers assigned to RTFs should remain with the HFD and EMS personnel in their RTF.
6. Officers providing initial trauma care should quickly search injured persons for weapons; treat obvious, life-threatening injuries; and move them to designated CCPs.
7. The RTFs or rescue teams are responsible for providing cover and moving injured persons from the CCPs to established ambulance exchange points.

G. After the Initial Threat is Neutralized

1. IC
  - a. As resources become available, the IC shall use additional officers to establish an outer perimeter to include security and traffic measures.

- b. To organize and consolidate the individuals at or arriving at the scene, the IC shall designate and staff the following areas:
  - (1) Evacuation and witness collection area(s), where individuals can be assessed, identified, and interviewed;
  - (2) The family unification area, where friends and family members of victims can gather to receive information from a police liaison; and
  - (3) Media area, where the media can be updated by a departmental public information officer.
- c. If necessary, the IC should coordinate with the TSS to establish interagency communication with fire, EMS, or other agencies.

2. SSD

- a. The SSD commander shall join and coordinate efforts with the UC.
- b. The SSD shall be responsible for ensuring the scene is safe.

H. Crime Scene Investigation

- a. After the SSD has determined that the scene is safe, the commander of the CID or designee shall become the IC.
- b. The IC shall ensure the preservation of the crime scene.
- c. Refer to Policy 4.29, CRIME SCENE: INVESTIGATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES, for further guidance.



V. REVIEW OF INCIDENT

Each time an active threat incident occurs, the Chief of Police may appoint an ad hoc committee to review this directive, all supplementary procedures, and the overall handling of the incident. A written report of the committee's findings and recommendations shall be submitted to the Chief of Police.

VI. ANNUAL ASSESSMENT

At the end of each calendar year, the MED commander or designee shall conduct and document an annual review of policies, procedures, and training related to active threat incidents by involving element commanders who are most responsible for developing these guidelines.



SUSAN BALLARD  
Chief of Police

Post on bulletin  
board for one week

Policy first issued  
as Procedure 9.15  
on March 5, 2007