



GUARD POINT MANAGEMENT

A Fraud Risk, Active Shooter Training-Consulting Firm

The Five Critical Components to Hinder Active Shooter Situations At large Events

I've been asked a lot from clients, friends and associates about active shooter situations and the developing stories that seem to come across the airwaves daily, including the latest unfortunate incident at the Garlic Festival in Gilroy, Ca. Unfortunately, there is no "business type" where these incidents occur which makes it difficult for stakeholders to adequately protect their employees and business. But what happens when an active shooter targets a large event, concert or festival like we saw in Las Vegas back in 2017 and how do you prepare?

It's a complex problem to figure out, but all the available stop gap measures for active shooter training put in place can hinder such an incident. I've put together a top five list for event organizers to consider in strengthening their employees with regards to response and preparation for the best-case outcome in a very dynamic situation.

I considered a lot of information when I developed this list. I am basing my findings on several different factors. First, the active shooter situation I was personally involved in. Yep, I was involved with and survived one as well. After reviewing after action reports and observations from that incident, I drew valuable knowledge on how to "harden" locations, such as a county fair where this incident actually occurred.

I've drawn on my experience providing security and resources to large events while working as a police officer for almost 20 years and later as the Director of Investigations for the Graton Gaming Commission for 5.5 years. I adapted different techniques on valuable data collected of ideas and procedures that had been implemented and tested as to what worked and what didn't. And lastly, I have spent a lot of time reviewing and dissecting each active shooter incident that has taken place here in the U.S. and abroad. Each one we look at reveals valuable lessons learned and helps develop new applications for prevention discovered from an absolutely horrifying incident.

As of now, based on my training and experience, these are the five considerations to think about when preparing for running an event, as it pertains to the active shooter threat.



GUARD POINT MANAGEMENT

A Fraud Risk, Active Shooter Training-Consulting Firm

- ❖ Make sure you, your staff and anyone working the event be trained in active shooter response. Not only getting them initially trained, but continue refresher courses every two years. Included in this training should be items discussed such as fight or flight, identifying potential workplace threats, reporting structure, etc. This training is critical and should be followed up with a definitive active shooter response plan section in the overall Emergency Action Plan.
- ❖ Make sure to have an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) in place that includes active shooter response. The EAP should be detailed and contain information such as how emergencies are reported, reporting responsibility, individuals to be contacted, Hospital information (such as local hospitals, those that have trauma centers etc.), law enforcement information (such as contact information, dispatch, etc.), electronic notification system (deployed to all event workers, i.e. text alerts or emergency phone calls, etc.)
- ❖ Have a strong HR department, possibly working with a workplace violence expert. Many active shooter incidents are also workplace violence incidents. The shooter was either a current or former employee enacting revenge on his/her previous employer. The workplace violence expert can be in-house or contracted, but either situation will provide valuable insight into workplace violence and how to prepare and defend against it. Also, set up a very fluid and simple mechanism to report employee suggestions or grievances. This can definitely help narrow down and eliminate potential threatening situations.
- ❖ Make sure to not only have a security apparatus in place, but the ratio of security personnel to guest is not only adequate, it can handle multiple situations at a time and continue to provide all access coverage. Difficult to do when trying to prepare for worst case scenario but there is lots of information out on the internet that talk about comfortable security numbers for events, depending on crowd size.
- ❖ I know this is an expense, but the installation and upkeep of a CCTV system. In this day and age, you are blind at a lot of events if you don't have some sort of surveillance system. They provide valuable coverage and, in some instances, can save on having to use additional manpower. Cameras are able to view and report on large portions of space in real time enabling staff to better dictate the needs for different types of resources. It also can capture historical events as they happened which can become important down the line. In some cases, you may be able to obtain insurance breaks for having a CCTV system installed at your event center.



GUARD POINT MANAGEMENT

A Fraud Risk, Active Shooter Training-Consulting Firm

Obviously, there are many more precautionary moves you can make when it comes to protecting your event, staff and guests from an active shooter incident. However, taking these five steps will help get you where you need to be to give yourself and everyone around you a better chance at surviving an active shooter incident.

The author, Chris Parman, is an expert in the area of active shooter investigations, training and preparing for an active shooter incident. Chris is a survivor of an active shooter incident in 1998. Chris has worked for the Alameda County Sheriff's Office as well as the Santa Rosa Police Department and spanned a career of almost 20 years in law enforcement. During his time in law enforcement he worked numerous assignments including Narcotics, Detective, Field Training Officer, Evidence Technician and SWAT.

Chris took his skills into the private sector, opening and helping develop and run the Graton Gaming Commission in Rohnert Park, Ca. Chris holds his Private Investigators License in the State of California and is currently writing a book outlining and dissecting active shooter response. If you have any questions about the article or would like more information on active shooter training, please feel free to call us at (707) 595-9560, email at chris@guardpointmanagement.com or visit the website at www.guardpointmanagement.com.