



# ACTIVE SHOOTER GUIDELINES FOR PLACES OF MASS GATHERING

AUSTRALIA-NEW ZEALAND **COUNTER-TERRORISM** COMMITTEE





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## Introduction

Places of mass gathering (PMG) can pose a broad range of security challenges for their owners and operators. They have been specifically identified—both nationally and internationally—as attractive targets for religious and political extremists, as well as disgruntled or mentally impaired individuals. Armed offender attacks have occurred and continue to occur in crowded places such as sporting, transport and entertainment venues. Government and private sector stakeholders must work cooperatively to ensure that integrated and effective plans and arrangements are in place to prevent or reduce the impact of such incidents.

These guidelines are intended to increase understanding of the threat that **active shooter** incidents pose to PMG. In particular, they seek to illustrate the key role that private sector stakeholders can play in developing and implementing appropriately informed prevention, preparedness, response and recovery arrangements to reduce the risks posed by such a threat. The guidance material has been developed by the Mass Gatherings Advisory Group on behalf of the Australia-New Zealand Counter-Terrorism Committee (ANZCTC), with input from the Mass Gatherings Business Advisory Group. It should be read in conjunction with the Australia- New Zealand Counter-Terrorism Committee's *National Guidelines for the Protection of Places of Mass Gathering from Terrorism* (2011).

## Purpose

These guidelines aim to increase stakeholder awareness of this particular type of dynamic threat, while also providing guidance on the issues and options that may be considered during risk mitigation and contingency planning activities. The *National Guidelines* (2011) set out several broad guiding principles that public and private sector stakeholders should consider to reduce their vulnerability to the threat of terrorism. These active shooter guidelines aim to supplement and build upon some of those broad areas of focus, with particular emphasis on the following two principles:

- Prevention and preparedness arrangements should be underpinned by an intelligence-led, risk management approach.
- Effective security outcomes in complex mass gathering environments require cooperation and coordination between all stakeholders.

Gaining a better understanding of the risk environment and options for preventing and dealing with active shooter incidents will enable private sector stakeholders to more effectively contribute to the collective national efforts to manage this threat to PMG. It is intended that this knowledge will lead to the development of 'contingency plans' or sub-plans that will supplement existing emergency response plans and arrangements at facilities and venues.

## Glossary of terms

<b>Active shooter:</b>	A person armed with a firearm(s) who is actively engaged in killing or attempting to cause serious harm to multiple people in a populated location.
<b>Emergency management:</b>	The plans, structures and arrangements that are established to bring together government, voluntary and private agencies in a coordinated way to deal with emergency needs, including prevention, response and recovery.
<b>Evacuation:</b>	The process of relocating people from dangerous or potentially dangerous areas to safer areas. The purpose of an evacuation is to use distance to separate people from the danger created by the emergency.
<b>Mitigation:</b>	Measures taken before, during, or after a disaster (emergency) to decrease or eliminate its impact on society (people) and the environment (places).
<b>Places of mass gathering (PMG):</b>	Are characterised by having a large concentration of people on a predictable basis, and include a diverse range of facilities and sites such as sporting venues, shopping/business precincts, public transport hubs and tourism/entertainment venues.
<b>Police first responder:</b>	The general-duties, uniformed police that often provide the initial policing response to calls for police assistance.
<b>Police Tactical Group (PTG):</b>	A highly trained police unit that tactically manages and resolves high-risk incidents, including terrorist incidents.
<b>Rapid deployment:</b>	The swift and immediate deployment of emergency services personnel to an ongoing situation where delayed deployment could result in serious injury or death.
<b>Situational awareness:</b>	The ability to quickly recognise and interpret an event, make sound decisions based on those interpretations, and establish early, effective and continuous lines of communication between the incident site and the controlling agency in order to provide ongoing accurate information about the situation to responders.
<b>Terrorist act:</b>	An act or threat committed with the intention of advancing a political, ideological or religious cause, and which is intended to coerce or intimidate an Australian government, a foreign government, or sections of the public, which causes serious physical harm or death to a person, endangers a person's life, causes serious damage to property, creates a serious risk to the health and safety of the public, or seriously interferes with, seriously disrupts, or destroys, an electronic system.

## Threat context

International experience indicates that firearm attacks continue to be one of the more common attack strategies adopted by violent extremists, due in part to their relative ease of access to weapons. Within the Australian context, while access to firearms is well regulated in comparison, their use is still considered to be one of the most likely methods of attack.

Historically, Australia and New Zealand have not been immune from active shooter events. Several significant incidents have occurred at places such as shopping centres, universities and public spaces while many potential attacks have been stopped. In August 2009, four men were arrested in relation to a terrorist plot targeting the Holsworthy Army Barracks in NSW where they planned to infiltrate the barracks and shoot as many people as possible. The Port Arthur, Hoddle Street, Strathfield, and Queen Street incidents in particular demonstrate that active shooter mass casualty attacks in Australia remain a real, persistent and substantial threat to the community.

The threat of self-directed lone actor attacks using basic weapons and firearms presents one of the most significant challenges for security and law enforcement agencies. Terrorist attacks in Canada, the United States, France, Denmark and Australia in late 2014 continue a recent trend towards this type of attack in the West. Terrorist propaganda continues to promote the efficacy of 'stand-alone' attacks, encouraging individuals in western countries to conduct attacks at home rather than travelling to overseas conflict zones.

Violent Islamist extremists are not the only potential source of threat for a lone actor active shooter attack. Any extremist ideology can give rise to a lone actor, while some individuals may not be motivated by any ideology at all. The deadliest mass casualty shooting to occur in Australia—the Port Arthur massacre in 1996—was perpetrated by an individual with no links to an extremist ideology. The Anders Breivik terrorist attack in Norway in July 2011

demonstrates that attacks can occur without forewarning and security services cannot guarantee visibility of all terrorist attack planning. It is also a reminder that attacks may also be inspired by a non-Islamist ideology and driven by local issues.

These guidelines aim to provide advice relative to the active shooter threat. Guidance material on the threat posed by IEDs is contained in a separate set of ANZCTC guidelines.

The current security context assessment is contained at *Appendix A*.

## Characteristics of active shooter incidents

The typical active shooter will attempt to kill as many people as possible within a short period of time. This is why they generally target places where they can achieve the greatest impact—i.e. crowded places. The rapid development of active shooter incidents often means the police first responders will be uniformed, general-duties police.

An active shooter incident does not generally include a hostage situation, but can potentially transition into one, particularly during the resolution phase.

### General features

Research to-date has not identified any significant trends regarding active shooter incidents, particularly in the Australian–New Zealand context. In fact, most incidents vary greatly from one attack to another. The following general features, however, are common elements of active shooter incidents:

- Incidents often occur in confined or controlled areas of high target concentration.
- Incidents often involve 'soft targets' such as shopping centres, schools and other PMG.
- Most incidents evolve rapidly and are often over within 10-15 minutes.



- Many active shooters will continue to attempt to harm victims until confronted by law enforcement personnel or some other type of intervention occurs.
- Most incidents will not be effectively resolved through negotiation or peaceful means.

## Weapons

Historically, Australian active shooter incidents have involved the use of long arm weapons (rifles and shotguns) although the use of handguns has become more prominent over the past ten years. Firearm ownership restrictions introduced by the government following the Port Arthur massacre significantly reduced the number of semi-automatic weapons in the community. Each year, however, many firearms are stolen from licensed firearm owners and could potentially fall into the wrong hands. Potential active shooters may therefore be able to access a wide variety of firearms, either legitimately or through criminal activities or connections. The terrorist attack against staff at the Charlie Hebdo office in Paris, and the disrupted 2015 attack in Belgium emphasise that the threat of well-planned and coordinated attacks using high powered weapons still endures in the West.

## Primary objectives

In most incidents, active shooters need freedom of movement and ready access to victims in order to achieve their objective. Therefore, **minimising the offender's access to potential victims** should be the primary objective of any plans or strategies. This is most likely to be achieved through the following activities:

- initiating immediate response activities
- minimising the duration of the incident
- restricting the offender's movements
- moving people from danger
- preventing people from entering the scene
- helping police to locate and contain the shooter.

## TIME + FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT = INCREASED CASUALTIES

Australia's strategic approach to counter-terrorism recognises the need to prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover (PPRR) from terrorist acts. The PPRR concept does not represent a consecutive set of activities and many elements of PPRR will often occur concurrently. Owners and operators of PMG and event organisers are strongly encouraged to ensure their own prevention, preparedness, response and recovery arrangements and activities align with those of emergency service agencies. The following sections provide guidance and considerations on how to achieve this, particularly in relation to active shooter situations.

## Prevention

Not all risks or emergencies can be prevented, so the concept of prevention needs to have a much broader meaning, and should encompass activities that may reduce the severity or impact of the emergency event. General prevention-related activities can include gathering and analysing intelligence, developing strategies to reduce the impact on life/property and identifying or eliminating vulnerabilities at potential target sites. For most types of hostile attacks, prevention activities should aim to:

- deter a would-be attacker – by providing physical and electronic security measures, coupled with good management practices
- detect an intrusion – by providing alarm and visual detection/recording systems
- Delay or limit the intrusion for a sufficient period to allow a response force to attend – by putting in place measures that will potentially limit the movement of the offender.

For active shooter attacks prevention-related activities specifically aimed at mitigating or reducing the severity of the incident should also be considered. The main focus of those activities should be on restricting the movement of the offender/s while reducing their access to further victims. How to best achieve this will depend on many variables, such as the physical design and security features of

the venue, the movement of the offender and the opportunities for escape/shelter in place.

Not all venues and events will share the same risk profile or have similar vulnerabilities, so the principle of 'proportionality' should generally be applied to any prevention-related activities. This means that protective security measures not only need to be proportionate to the level of assessed risk, but should also try to strike a balance between the threat to public safety and the protection of civil liberties. However, when measuring proportionality it should be recognised that prevention and mitigation activities related to a specific threat may also provide broader crime prevention and public safety benefits.

## Preparedness

Activities associated with preparedness include emergency planning, resourcing, capability development and testing of preparedness arrangements. These arrangements and activities are generally focused on known or expected incidents, threats or emergency events. However, for generally unexpected and dynamic events, such as active shooter incidents, PMG owners and operators should adopt a 'contingency planning' approach.

### Contingency planning

The aim of contingency planning is to counter emerging threats and respond when unexpected situations arise. Contingency plans generally supplement or complement general emergency response plans and arrangements, and are often designed as sub-plans. Some of the basic features of contingency plans are outlined below.

#### Combined and coordinated management:

Contingency plans should be based on a multi-stakeholder approach. They should consider and, where possible, integrate existing venue procedures and local emergency response plans and arrangements.

### Assessment

Factors to consider when designing contingency plans include the characteristics of the location and the potential consequences of an attack at that location. Information and intelligence relevant to the likelihood of a particular target being subject to that type of threat should also be considered during the risk assessment process. Organisations should avoid a 'one size fits all' approach to differing venues.

### Response

Contingency plans should provide a range of options and scenarios to deal with specific issues. There is no one model to respond to every emergency, so responses need to be flexible and varied according to the nature and effects of the crisis. However there are some common objectives that characterise most emergency responses.

These include:

1. saving and protecting life
2. facilitating the evacuation of those at risk
3. containing the incident or threat
4. supporting emergency response and investigation activities.

Contingency plans should form part of overall emergency planning and briefing arrangements. All emergency plans should be tested and reviewed on a regular basis to ensure they are well understood, contemporary and effective.

Guidance for initial response considerations for venue management is contained at *Appendix B*.

## Response

### Initial response

Because of the dynamic and unpredictable nature of active shooter incidents there is no best practice or recommended response action that PMG owners and operators can build into their plans, arrangements and training

activities. As previously mentioned, the primary objective of any initial response planning should be to minimise the offender's access to victims. Therefore owners and operators should develop and practise strategies aimed at evacuating or isolating people or the offender. The US Department of Homeland Security has developed an *Active Shooter: How to Respond* guide that is widely used internationally and outlines three key areas of focus.

**Escape:** Building occupants should consider evacuating the facility if it is safe to do so. They should leave behind most belongings and determine the safest escape route before beginning to move. Maintaining concealment or cover from gunfire while moving is also important.

**Hide:** If safely evacuating the venue is not possible, occupants should seek to hide in a secure area where they can lock the door, blockade the door with heavy furniture, cover all windows, turn off all lights and remain silent. Mobile phones should also be turned to silent.

**Take action:** If the option of hiding in place is adopted, individuals may also need to consider options to disrupt and/or incapacitate the active shooter in the event they are located. This can include using or throwing available objects or using aggressive force when confronted. Such action should only be taken as a last resort and in order to protect the life of the individual or others in that area.

## Transition considerations

Responsibility for implementing and coordinating initial response activities will, in most instances, be assumed by the venue/facility management or security staff until emergency responders are able to take over that responsibility. A critical aspect of managing that response and transitioning responsibility will be the ability to gain 'situational awareness'. Establishing early, effective and continuous lines of communication from the incident site to the

responding police agency will be critical in order to accurately inform them of the present situation and its subsequent development. Knowing or understanding the expectations of law enforcement responders will also enable a faster transition of incident management. Planning and staff capability/training activities should include:

- developing strategies that allow designated staff to safely maintain situational awareness of the incident and relay any new information to police first responders
- training staff and occupants in how to respond when law enforcement arrives on scene.

The preferred response when police arrive may vary slightly across Australian states and territories, so PMG owners and operators should consult with local law enforcement agencies when developing their plans.

Guidance for initial response considerations for affected staff and occupants is contained at *Appendix C*.

## Police response

Each jurisdiction has systems and inter-agency arrangements that provide the basis for emergency management and critical incident response. These procedures and arrangements have been tailored to meet the specific needs, capacities and capabilities in each jurisdiction's operating environment. Commonalities across Australian and New Zealand police jurisdictions include:

- operational response strategies, including incident and emergency management models
- a use of force model supported by operational principles, skills and tactics training.

Despite many similarities, there remain a number of differences in emergency management arrangements, processes and terminology across the states and territories. It is therefore critical that PMG and major event stakeholders

develop a firm understanding of the emergency service plans and arrangements that apply to the jurisdiction that they are operating in.

Due to the dynamic nature of active shooter incidents, highly trained and equipped police tactical group operators may be unable to respond to a scene in a timely manner. As such, uniformed, general-duties police officers will generally provide the initial response to most active shooter situations and may potentially manage them to their conclusion. While the specific tactics, policies and training of police first responders may vary across jurisdictions, it is expected that the following objectives will guide their initial response activities.

**Mission:** The main objective of the police first responders in an active shooter incident is to save lives and prevent further loss of life or injuries. This will generally be achieved through a rapid deployment strategy.

The focus of a rapid deployment strategy should be to reduce or suppress the threat posed by the active shooter as quickly as possible. Traditional cordon, contain and negotiate strategies are unlikely to be effective in reducing the time a shooter has to achieve their desired outcomes, or limiting their freedom of movement. The most appropriate response to an active shooter incident will also depend on other factors, including available police resources, the incident setting and the tactics or weapons involved.

**Locate and isolate:** Once the decision to rapidly deploy has been made, the focus will generally be on how to reduce the offender's area of operation and access to potential victims. This is best achieved by quickly locating the offender and containing the threat. To achieve this, first responders may initially need to keep moving past casualties and panicked people to try and contain the threat as quickly as possible.

**Command and control:** Any response to a major emergency or incident should be managed by an appropriate command, control and coordination structure. In active shooter situations, however, this might not be achievable in the first instance as it may delay any rapid deployment activities. The need to establish effective command and control of the incident, including coordination with venue management, may therefore become a secondary priority that is delegated to other responding units.

## Recovery

To ensure a smooth transition from response to recovery, arrangements that commenced during response should be gradually devolved and integrated. This will include aspects such as media and information management, impact assessment, rehabilitation of the built environment and restoring community and staff confidence. While many recovery-related matters will be similar for the majority of emergency events, significant or traumatic events such as terrorist acts or active shooter incidents may add extra complexity to normal recovery procedures.

Key recovery considerations following an active shooter incident may include:

- public information and community confidence
- scene preservation and investigation activities
- business continuity challenges.

## Public information

Media or public information activities must support operational policies and actions. To achieve this, public messaging should be developed in coordination with the relevant operational and media/public relations managers. This is particularly important in situations where an offender has been taken into custody or charged with offences relating to the incident, as issues of sub-judice may arise. Information should be provided regularly to keep the public informed and should only

be restricted in the interests of safety and/or operational security. Information issues relating to consequence management, such as providing assistance to victims, should be clearly identified as separate from the actual incident or security issue. As a general rule:

- an agency must only release information for which it has responsibility
- a log of all public information activities and decisions should be maintained.

The National Security Public Information Guidelines provide a framework for the Australian Government and state and territory agencies relating to national security issues and incidents. They are available at [www.nationalsecurity.gov.au](http://www.nationalsecurity.gov.au).

## Crime scene and investigation activities

Police will conduct some form of major investigation for all active shooter incidents. This could involve criminal and forensic investigations in relation to potential criminal offences (including acts of terrorism), as well as coronial investigations on behalf of the coroner. These investigation processes will need to be extremely thorough and may often be protracted, particularly where the incident has occurred over a broad geographical area, or involves significant forensic challenges. During the investigation phase the police may also seek assistance from management at the location to help identify potential sources of evidence or witnesses. This could include CCTV footage, and radio, telephone or decision-making logs. Recovery or business continuity plans should identify a suitable liaison officer that can work with the police to help facilitate these types of requests.

## Business continuity

How quickly and painlessly owners and operators return to business-as-usual following a terrorist attack or other disaster depends on how effectively they can devise and implement their business continuity management arrangements. Through their contact with investigating police,

the nominated liaison officer will generally be in a position to obtain information about the likely duration of the scene examination, allowing the venue to start implementing their business continuity arrangements. While the actual process may not change significantly, the amount of time it takes often will.

## Useful links

Australian national security:  
[www.nationalsecurity.gov.au](http://www.nationalsecurity.gov.au)

Australian emergency management:  
[www.em.gov.au](http://www.em.gov.au)

ASIO Business Liaison Unit:  
[www.bl.u.asio.gov.au](http://www.bl.u.asio.gov.au)

Department of Homeland Security (US):  
[www.dhs.gov/preventing-terrorism](http://www.dhs.gov/preventing-terrorism)

National Counter Terrorism Security Office (UK):  
[www.nactso.gov.uk/publications](http://www.nactso.gov.uk/publications)

## Version control

This document is endorsed by the Australia-New Zealand National Counter-Terrorism Committee (ANZCTC) and maintained by the National Security Resilience Policy Division (NSRPD) of the Attorney-General's Department.

The Attorney-General's Department is responsible for the version control of this document.

To preserve the integrity and currency of this document:

- major amendments must be endorsed by the ANZCTC
- minor amendments, for example to correct spelling or grammar, should be documented and forwarded to the NSRPD to be implemented and then a revised version sent to the Mass Gatherings Advisory Group (MGAG) to be endorsed before it is distributed.



## Appendix A

### Current security context

In September 2014, the National Threat Assessment Centre raised the general terrorism threat level for Australia to HIGH. While this advice did not indicate a terrorist attack was imminent, an attack in Australia is now assessed as likely. Recent low-capability attacks and disrupted plots in Australia and overseas reinforce the elevated threat and provide cogent examples of the enduring terrorist threat.

In September 2014, the National Threat Assessment Centre raised the general terrorism threat level for Australia to HIGH. While this advice did not indicate a terrorist attack was imminent, an attack in Australia is now assessed as likely. Recent low-capability attacks and disrupted plots in Australia and overseas reinforce the elevated threat and provide cogent examples of the enduring terrorist threat.

The conflict in Syria and Iraq continues to resonate strongly with those who may be susceptible to the extremist rhetoric of these groups. Individuals who are attracted to the jihadist narrative but have not travelled to these conflict areas—especially those prevented from travelling—pose an enduring threat and may be inspired to conduct an onshore attack.

The threat of self-directed 'lone actor' attacks using firearms, home-made explosives or basic weapons presents a significant challenge for security and law enforcement agencies. Terrorist attacks in Canada, the United States, France, Denmark and Australia in late 2014 and early 2015 continue a trend towards this type of attack in the West.

Places of Mass Gathering and some Critical Infrastructure sectors - due to their symbolic nature, concentration of people and economic or social importance – will continue to be a particular focus for attacks by those holding violent extremist views. Personnel and premises readily identifiable with Australia's counter-terrorism and defence policies may also be considered attractive targets, with recent low-capability attacks on uniformed police and military personnel in Australia and overseas underscoring this threat.

Australian Security Intelligence Organisation

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## Appendix B

### Firearm attack - initial action advice for management

**Response priorities:** During an active shooter incident the *primary response objectives* and the potential actions for achieving them may include:

#### 1. Saving and protecting life

- a. Appoint an incident manager to coordinate activities until police arrive.
- b. Use the built environment to restrict or deny access.
- c. Commence CCTV surveillance and track the offender(s).
- d. Communicate appropriate cover and concealment options to those present.
- e. Identify and establish a safe medical triage/first aid location.
- f. Restrict further vehicle access to the site (bollards, gates, road closures, etc).
- g. Restrict physical access to the site or general vicinity.

#### 2. Facilitating the evacuation of those at risk

- a. Notify key staff of the incident through prearranged messages/codes and methods.
- b. Appoint an evacuation manager and ensure they have situational awareness.
- c. Provide guidance on safe routes for those that are self-evacuating.
- d. Assess the suitability and potential safety of normal evacuation routes.
- e. Evaluate the safety of standing evacuation muster points and change if necessary.
- f. Identify potential safe places or strong holds for those unable to evacuate.

#### 3. Containing the incident or threat

- a. Consider using electronic or mechanical isolation systems to constrain the movement of the offender or restrict access to potential victims.
- b. Identify and establish a perimeter.
- c. Use the existing built environment to best advantage for safety and containment action.
- d. Consider restricting escape options for the offender if these may endanger others.

#### 4. Supporting emergency response and investigation activities

- a. Identify and communicate safe access routes/form up points for emergency services.
- b. Consider using CCTV and other remote methods where possible.
- c. Commence incident and decision-making logs.
- d. Nominate a suitable emergency services liaison officer to meet/brief the police.
- e. Ensure access to site plans and CCTV footage (where possible).
- f. Clearly identify when incident management has transitioned to the police.
- g. Provide ongoing support to the emergency response action as requested.

*It is important to regularly practise these and any additional initial response activities so that key managers and staff clearly understand the priority actions and are able to perform these actions in a high-stress and dynamic environment.*

## Appendix C

### Firearm attack - initial action advice for individuals

Attacks involving firearms do occur, so it is important to be prepared to react when an incident does occur. Having thought about your potential options and actions in advance will help you to make better informed decisions in a stressful and chaotic environment. The advice below may help with pre-planning your response options.

#### ESCAPE

**Your priority action should be to remove yourself and any others in your area from close proximity to the offender, or areas that they have or may be able to access. Your ability to safely do this and your available options may be determined by the following considerations:**

**Under immediate gunfire** – Take cover initially, but attempt to leave the area as soon as possible if safe to do so. Try to confirm that your **escape route is safe**.

- Leave most of your belongings behind (except for mobile phone).
- Do not congregate in open areas or wait at evacuation points.
- Provide guidance to people that might be unfamiliar with the area.

**Nearby gunfire** – Leave the area immediately and move quickly away from the area that the gunfire is coming from, if it is safe to do so.

In both situations you should try to maintain cover and concealment (see below).

#### Cover from gunfire

- Brickwork or concrete walls
- Vehicles (engine block area)
- Large trees & fixed objects

- Earth banks/hills/mounds

**Concealment from view** (in addition to above options)

- Building walls and partitions (internal and external)
- Vehicles
- Fences and other large structures
- Blinds/curtains

#### HIDE

If you don't believe you can safely evacuate, or this may not be the best option, then you may need to consider sheltering in place (providing there is a suitable option available).

- Avoid congregating in open areas, such as corridors and foyers.
- Consider locking/barricading yourself and others in a room or secure area.
- Secure your immediate environment and other vulnerable areas.
- Move away from the door, remain quiet and stay there until told otherwise by appropriate authorities, or you need to move for safety reasons.
- Silence mobile phones and other devices that may identify your presence.
- Try to contact police (000) or others to advise of your location/situation.
- Choose a location which may enable access to a more secure area.



## ACT

Constantly re-assess the situation and your options based on the best available information.

These situations are very dynamic and often involve a moving threat.

- Consider whether a safe escape route might now be possible if the circumstances have changed.
- Assess better options for sheltering in place either within your current location or at an alternative location.
- Consider (only as a last resort) options for arming yourself with improvised weapons to defend yourself in the event that you are located by the offender.

## SEE/TELL

The more information you can pass on to police the better, but NEVER risk your own safety or that of others to gain it.

**If it is safe to do so, think about obtaining the following information:**

- exact location of the incident
- description of the offender and whether moving in any particular direction description of the offender and whether moving in any particular direction
- details of any firearm/s being used
- number of people in the area and any that have been injured
- the motive or intent of the offender(if known or apparent)

Provide this information immediately to the police via 000 if this can be achieved safely. You may be asked to remain on the line and provide any other information or updates that the operator requests or if the situation changes. Consider providing information

and advice to others that may be in your area that may be unsure of the current location of the threat and what they should do. Whether you are able to safely do this, and the communication methods available to you, will be determined by the circumstances and your own assessment of the situation.

## Police response

**In an attack involving firearms a police officer's priority is to protect lives.** One of their priority actions to achieve this will be to locate the offender and effectively manage that threat as quickly as possible, which could mean initially moving past people who need help. As more police resources become involved they will attempt to quickly provide support and guidance to persons affected by the incident. At some stage they will generally conduct a 'clearance' search of the location to ensure that all persons involved or impacted by the incident are located, and to make the scene safe.

## Please remember:

- At first police officers may not be able to distinguish you from the gunman.
- Police officers may be armed and could point guns in your direction.
- Avoid quick movements or shouting and keep your hands in view.
- They may initially move past you in search of the gunman.
- Be aware that police may enter your location at some stage to secure the building and locate people that have hidden from the threat.
- Promptly follow any instructions given by emergency responders.

## Information and advice:

**In the case of an emergency, dial 000 for reporting an incident or immediate advice.  
For all other inquiries, contact your police Counter Terrorism contacts in your jurisdiction:**

### ACT Policing

Emergency Management and Planning  
(02) 6256 7777  
[ACT-EM&P@afp.gov.au](mailto:ACT-EM&P@afp.gov.au)

### New South Wales Police

Counter Terrorist Business Contact Unit  
(02) 9919 9278  
[bcu@police.nsw.gov.au](mailto:bcu@police.nsw.gov.au)

### Northern Territory Police

131 444 (in NT)  
[Ctsecurity@nt.gov.au](mailto:Ctsecurity@nt.gov.au)

### Queensland Police

Intelligence, CT & Major Events Command  
(07) 3406 3670  
[Counter.Terrorism@police.qld.gov.au](mailto:Counter.Terrorism@police.qld.gov.au)

### South Australia Police

Critical Infrastructure Support Group  
(08) 7322 3622  
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### Tasmania Police

Special Response and Counter-Terrorism Unit  
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### Victoria Police

Counter -Terrorism Coordination Unit  
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### Western Australia Police

Security Operations Division  
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