

Appendix C: Active Armed Offender attack – initial action advice for individuals

When attacks involving firearms and other weapons occur it is important to be prepared to react quickly. Considering your potential options and actions in advance will help you to make more informed decisions quickly in a stressful and chaotic environment. The following advice may help with pre-planning your response options.

ESCAPE

Your priority action should be to remove yourself and others from close proximity to the offender/s, or areas that they might reasonably access. The following actions may influence the decisions you make in safely assessing your available options:

Under immediate attack – Take cover initially, but attempt to leave the area as soon as it is safe to do so.

- 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.
- Make good use of available cover and concealment opportunities.
- 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.

Nearby attack – Leave the area immediately and move quickly from where the attack is located, but only if it is safe to do so.

Cover from gunfire

- Brickwork or concrete walls;
- Vehicles (engine block area);
- Large trees & fixed objects; and
- 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; and
- Blinds/curtains.

HIDE

If you don't believe you can safely evacuate, then you may need to consider sheltering in place. Constantly re-assess the situation and your options based on the best available information.

- Avoid congregating in open areas, such as corridors and foyers;
- Consider locking or 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 and situation;
- Assess and re-assess better options for sheltering in place either within your current location or at an alternative location;
- Choose a location which may enable access to a more secure area; and
- 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.

TELL

The more information you can pass on to the police or owners and operators the better, but NEVER at the risk of your own safety or the safety of others.

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

- Exact location of the incident;
- Description of the offender/s and whether they are moving in any particular direction;
- Details of any weapons being used;
- Number of people in the area and any that have been injured; and
- The motive or intent of the offender/s (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 further 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 Active Armed Offender scenario 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 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:

- Upon arriving at the scene, it is possible police officers may initially not be able to distinguish you from the offender(s);
- Police officers will 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 offender/s;
- Be aware that police may enter your location at some stage to secure the building and locate people that have hidden from the threat; and
- Promptly follow any instructions given by emergency responders.

Information and advice

In life-threatening situations or in the case of an emergency, **dial 000**.

Suspicious or unusual behaviour should be reported to local police by phoning 131 444 or by contacting the National Security Hotline on 1800 123 400, if the information is not time-critical.

For all other inquiries, contact police in your jurisdiction. Contact details can be found at www.nationalsecurity.gov.au/crowdedplaces.