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**NAVAL  
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SCHOOL**

**MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA**

**THESIS**

**LOCAL JURISDICTIONS AND ACTIVE SHOOTERS:  
BUILDING NETWORKS, BUILDING CAPACITIES**

by

Tracy L. Frazzano

December 2010

Thesis Advisors:

Sam Clovis, Jr.  
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**LOCAL JURISDICTIONS AND ACTIVE SHOOTERS:  
BUILDING NETWORKS, BUILDING CAPACITIES**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

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## **ABSTRACT**

The emerging threat of terrorism, specifically small unit active shooter attacks, is a concern for American law enforcement agencies. Events like Mumbai (November 26, 2008) and Beslan (September 1, 2004) demonstrate the vulnerability of local law enforcement officers in defending against multiple attackers and multiple locations. Smaller jurisdictions (populations less than 100,000 people) are challenged with administrative and operational capacities considerably more than larger jurisdictions. Therefore, in a time where budgetary constraints have become stricter, smaller agencies must find ways to enhance their capacities. To investigate this problem and find workable solutions, qualitative research methods of case studies and interviews were employed. Specifically, Mumbai, Beslan and two high-profile United States incidents (Columbine High School shooting (April 20, 1999) and North Hollywood Bank shoot out (February 28, 1997) were studied. Individuals from the U.S. cases were interviewed to explore information not necessarily documented. Data from the case studies and interviews were collated and reviewed for common themes. These themes were analyzed to draw conclusions on how smaller jurisdictions should proceed in building capacities to deal with active shooter scenarios. Findings suggest that smaller jurisdictions can build capacities by creating a megacommunity within local law enforcement. This includes developing systems to share smart practices, training for small unit attacks, and creating multi-jurisdictional interoperability standards.



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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

DHS	Department of Homeland Security
ESU	Emergency Service Unit
FSB	Federal Security Service
HLEC	High Level Enquiry Committee
HSPD-5	Homeland Security Presidential Directive-5
ICS	Incident Command System
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
LAPD	Los Angeles Police Department
MACTAC	Multi Assault Counter Terrorism Action Capabilities
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NIMS	National Incident Management System
NRF	National Response Framework
NRP	National Response Plan
NSG	National Security Guard
NTOA	National Tactical Officers Association
NYPD	New York City Police Department
PTC	Police Training Commission
SRO	School Resource Officer
STRATFOR	Strategic Forensic Incorporated
SWAT	Special Weapons and Tactics
UPR	Urban Police Rifles
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction

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# I. INTRODUCTION

## A. INTRODUCTION

The events of September 11, 2001, have forced American law enforcement agencies to rethink the way they operate when confronted with extraordinary violence within jurisdictional borders. An attack by well-trained terrorists armed with military weapons in public areas, such as schools, shopping malls, churches or any of the many other locations where Americans typically congregate, is a real threat to our sense of security and daily lives. The possibility of high intensity firearms attacks is of growing concern since such attacks are standard terrorist fare overseas. The terror attacks that took place in November of 2008 in the city of Mumbai, India have had a chilling effect on law enforcement agencies across the world and particularly in the United States. Given the ready access to firearms in this country and the recent spate of what has become known as “active shooter” scenarios unfolding across the nation, jurisdictions, regardless of size or capacity, must find ways to marshal appropriate and effective responses to these events. In India, the police force of one of the largest cities in the country could not deal with several terrorist shooters attacking citizens in multiple locations. The Indian army had to be called out to contain, and then suppress, the terrorists. Though this particular attack took place in another part of the world, one needs to look no further than the school shooting of Columbine (April 20, 1999) or to the North Hollywood bank shootout (February 28, 1997) to find active shooter scenarios that overwhelmed U.S. local law enforcement. It is this lack of capacity to face what has become a much more plausible and possible scenario that will require local jurisdictions, particularly those with limited capacities, to find ways to deal with such threats.

Within the larger jurisdictions around the country, local governments have the resources to take advantage of economies of scale to provide specialized capabilities to citizens. In law enforcement, such specialization may include several special tactics squads and equipment that can be brought to bear on significant, high intensity events. In smaller jurisdictions, however, capacities are significantly reduced (Clovis, 2008, p. 10).



Though smaller jurisdictions might have special tactics law enforcement squads, those squads will not likely be able to deal with active shooter scenarios that include multiple shooters in multiple locations with own-source resources. How, then, are these jurisdictions to protect their citizens when local capabilities and capacities are overwhelmed? The Mumbai terror incident has brought the problem of limited law enforcement capacity into focus.

## **B. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The Township of Montclair, New Jersey, defines an active shooter event as “one or more suspects who participate in an ongoing, random, or systematic shooting spree, demonstrating their intent to continuously harm others with the overriding objective of mass murder” (Township of Montclair, 2007, p. 2). The traditional response to anticipated active shooter scenarios involved containment (limiting the suspect’s movement), isolation (keep them secluded from others until specialized response units arrive) and negotiation (trained officers speaking in a manner to resolve the conflict peacefully). Given what has been learned from the Mumbai incident and incidents in the United States, these approaches have proven to be inadequate and inappropriate (Borsch, 2007). Today, the conventional wisdom concerning effective tactics for active shooters is now grounded in a counterattack and the aggressive confrontation of the suspect or suspects (Erickson, 2001, p. x). Small jurisdictions—for the purposes of this paper those with a population fewer than 100,000 people—will need the help of other jurisdictions to mount appropriate responses. The problem these smaller jurisdictions face is how to marshal support, in a time sensitive environment, from other jurisdictions so that all participants have common tactics, common communications capabilities and a common lexicon for seamless, effective operations.

## **C. BACKGROUND**

On November 26, 2008, coordinated terrorist attacks struck the heart of Mumbai, India’s commercial capital. The 10 attackers were divided into four attack teams, each team engaging in sequential attacks on separate locations, including Mumbai’s main train

station and the Trident-Oberoi and Taj Mahal Palace Hotels (Rabasa, 2009, pp. 5–6). The terrorist attacks lasted for 60 hours and resulted in the deaths of at least 172 people (Rabasa, 2009, pp. 5–6). This scenario is a worst case multiple “active shooter” scenario. While terrorism has plagued civilization for centuries, the destructive power and global reach of modern terrorists is unprecedented. Though many local jurisdictions do not consider terrorism as a threat of major concern, the post-September 11 world has taught all levels of government that the tools for conducting serious terrorist attacks are much easier to acquire, particularly in a society built upon personal freedom.

Attacks, such as the one that took place in Mumbai, seem much more likely given the history of spree shooting events in the United States and the clear uptick in terrorist activities documented in recent headlines. Labeled “Fedayeen” (self-sacrificer) attacks, in the Bipartisan Policy Center 2010 report *Assessing the Terrorist Threat*, small unit attacks has been identified as a potential future tactic that the U.S. government should focus more on (Bipartisan Policy Center, 2010, p. 28). Active shooter scenarios involving multiple shooters and multiple locations are now being looked at in law enforcement as “asymmetric warfare.” This term officially entered the Department of Defense vocabulary when the definition appeared in the 1997 *Quadrennial Defense Review* (Department of Defense, 1997, section 2). Asymmetric warfare is defined as a “weaker opponent using unconventional tactics against a stronger, more conventional foe” (Li-Wei, 2002, p. 23). Asymmetric attacks involve different levels of sophistication and intensity along with multiple and sequential attacks.

The United States is not immune from internal, home-grown terrorism. In 2009, the Federal Bureau of Investigation added a domestic terrorist to its Most Wanted List (USAToday, 2009, p. 1). The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) issued a report in 2009 warning about a rise in right-wing extremist activity, stating the economic recession, the election of America’s first African American president and the return of disgruntled war veterans as fueling the ranks of white-power militias (United States Department of Homeland Security [DHS], 2009, p. 2). The report further states that “lone wolves and small terrorist cells” represent the nation’s biggest terrorist threat because their low profile makes it difficult to intervene before they act (DHS, 2009, p. 3).

The report was part of a series that DHS compiles on domestic dangers from all sides of the political spectrum. A string of recent events shows the prescience of those reports and illustrates that terrorism can come from the inside. Recent incidents supporting the rise in domestic terrorism are manifested in lone wolf attacks, such as those mounted by army psychiatrist Major Nidal Malik Hasan and white supremacist James Wenneker von Brunn. Hasan shot 30 people and killed an additional 13 at the Fort Hood military base in Texas (November 5, 2009). In a similar attack, Wenneker von Brunn shot a security guard at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum (June 13, 2009). In Little Rock Arkansas, Abdulhakim Mujahid Muhammad, a recent convert to Islam, shot and killed a soldier outside an Army recruiting booth (June 1, 2009). Later that year, Scott Roeder, part of a militant antiabortion group, gunned down an abortion doctor in church in Wichita, Kansas (May 31, 2009). Harlan James Drake killed by gunfire an anti-abortionist activist in front of a school in Owosso, Michigan (September 11, 2009). Although not all of these incidents are right-wing extremism, each is an example of domestic terrorism and each required local law enforcement response to an active shooter scenario, indicative of a threat that has become increasingly high profile—the extremist conducting an attack on a politically significant target. Active shooter scenarios such as these required immediate action and rapid deployment of police personnel.

At the local government level, elected officials build budgets that reflect, either implicitly or explicitly, some sense of risk assessment. The level of public safety expenditure is a clear indicator of that assessment. Many smaller jurisdictions might very well establish special tactics units to deal with unusual, highly volatile and extraordinarily dangerous scenarios. The tactics, techniques and procedures suitable for the most frequently encountered scenarios of high risk warrant service and barricaded suspects are not compatible with the requirements of combat against multiple, dedicated, heavily armed terrorists. In this more dangerous world, the street officer is now an essential part of the specialized tactics units, actually being the first to intervene. These new scenarios will likely overwhelm local capacities very quickly thus forcing local jurisdictions to find ways to deal with these scenarios in highly resource constrained environments (Virginia Tech Review Panel, 2007, p. 11). Seeking help from neighbors is

not a new idea, but the complexity of government now requires those jurisdictions with limited capacities to become imaginative in meeting constituent needs. However, gaining willing partners is not always an easy task to complete due to dissimilar tactics, techniques, procedures and lack of experience in conducting multi-agency tactical operations. If local jurisdictions can solve the problem of dealing with difficult scenarios, those methods and approaches can be applied to other challenges local governments face in resource constrained conditions.

#### **D. RESEARCH QUESTION**

Recent history provides impetus to find ways to enhance cooperation among local law enforcement agencies when called upon to deal with active shooter scenarios. After the terror attacks in Mumbai, considerable attention has been brought to the implications of asymmetric attack. In particular, a focus on finding ways for law enforcement agencies to deal with sophisticated attacks that might escalate into multiple shooter/multiple location events needs to be addressed. Local law enforcement agencies, predominantly in smaller jurisdictions, will exhaust existing capacity rapidly and will have to rely on horizontal and vertical networking to gain the assets necessary to deal with these difficult circumstances. To that end, this project seeks to discover how best to enhance law enforcement capacities when faced with complex active shooter scenarios. The primary research question is:

Given the differences likely to be found across local law enforcement agencies in training, communications and tactics related to active shooter scenarios, what might be the most effective and efficient ways to enhance those capacities?

#### **E. SECONDARY QUESTIONS**

1. What factors inhibit cooperation among surrounding jurisdictions from involvement in developing a common lexicon, communications protocols and tactics for supporting active shooter scenarios?
2. What factors are likely to incentivize cooperative behavior among jurisdictions?

3. If best practices can be developed locally to address the complex active shooter scenario, are there opportunities to expand these processes to develop national programs?
4. What, if any, are the theoretical underpinnings of finding cooperative systems such as is suggested in the primary question?

## **F. HYPOTHESIS**

The November 26, 2008, terrorist attacks on Mumbai, India's commercial capital expanded the terms and dimensions of what law enforcement officials in the United States call an active shooter scenario. The claim for this thesis is that for local law enforcement operations, especially those jurisdictions with a population below 100,000 residents, the demands on the resources and tactics in response to similar attacks will likely be overwhelmed. Enhanced cooperation among local law enforcement agencies to narrow the gap in response capacities and preparedness will be required before local jurisdictions will be able to deal with attacks of this scope and scale.

Attacks of the magnitude of the Mumbai episode are new for local law enforcement. As the world continues to move in the direction of more danger on a much broader front, local law enforcement operations will likely have to confront multiple shooters in multiple locations—the worst possible armed assailant scenario possible. In an era of constrained resources, local governments and their police forces are faced with increased risk and vulnerability at the same time resources are more restricted. In order to increase capacities so as to meet the evolving threat, local jurisdictions must seek and secure support from other law enforcement agencies. Today, there are diverse tactics, capacities and operational approaches to active shooter scenarios. For local jurisdictions to overcome these challenges, each jurisdiction must network with and seek support from surrounding jurisdictions. This inter-local cooperation is a challenge because such cooperation is not the norm in the country; however, if jurisdictions are to constructively deal with active shooter scenarios, these barriers to cooperation must be overcome.

For law enforcement agencies in the United States, the individual street officer is the first critical line of defense against domestic acts of terrorism. The capabilities of the individual officer need to change to encompass a better trained and better skilled full

spectrum police officer capable of operating in a range of environments and missions—quickly transitioning from community policing to high intensity operations. Most larger police departments in the U.S. are equipped with skilled tactical units; however, it takes time for these units to respond to an incident in progress. Unlike most criminals, active shooters are likely to continue their use of deadly force until intervention occurs or until the shooter decides to stop. Once it is recognized that the intention of these attackers is not to take hostages but to wound or kill civilians, the objective of law enforcement first responders should be to initiate a counter offensive. The goal of these responding units will be to quickly restore public order by focusing available resources on the opponent. As demonstrated in Mumbai, law enforcement agencies had significant difficulty in identifying, responding to and effectively controlling the simultaneous armed attacks. Law enforcement agencies need to prepare for this type of attack by realizing that a formed police response capable of transitioning quickly to high intensity, close conflict is important for a Mumbai-like scenario.

Evidence supporting this argument can first be found in data developed by the U.S. Department of Justice. An analysis of the 2009 data concerning only full-time sworn law enforcement personnel showed that by region, law enforcement agencies in the cities in the Northeast had the highest rate of sworn officers, 2.7, per 1,000 inhabitants (U.S. Department of Justice [DOJ], 2009, Table 71). The rate of law enforcement officers for each 1,000 in population was 2.6 in the South, 2.2 in the Midwest, and 1.7 in the West (DOJ, 2009, Table 71). Populations with 25,000 to 49,999 and 50,000 to 99,999 had the lowest rate of 1.8 officers per 1,000 (DOJ, 2009, Table 71). What is demonstrated by this is that the number of law enforcement officers able to respond to an active shooter situation is significantly reduced in most of these small jurisdictions (Clovis, 2008, p. 10). Other evidence is in the practice of establishing mutual aid agreements or memorandums of agreements (Bicker & Stein, 2004, p. 813). While seeking formal mutual aid agreement is common, this approach often lacks consideration for overall training procedures and can further lead to a lack of common structure and command.

In times of crisis, neighboring jurisdictions are hoped to be an allied support system; however, due to potential dissimilar tactics, techniques, procedures and lack of experience in conducting multi-agency tactical operations, ad-hoc protocols are established that more than often cause further confusion and chaos. The need to collaborate, communicate and execute a response instantaneously can only be accomplished through pre-planning and a strategic outlook.

An initiative to coordinate local law enforcement efforts and response with surrounding law enforcement agencies is essential. During a multiple location active shooter scenario, law enforcement agencies must take necessary actions to ensure they are working as a team with other responding agencies to initiate a counter offensive and aggressively confront the attackers. While these efforts do not need to be formal, collectively learning, networking and building relationships tends to garner collaboration.

#### **G. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Given the frequent occurrence of active shooter scenarios across the globe, it would be unwise to believe that terrorists trained in military-style active shooter attacks would not employ such tactics within our borders. The impact of a Mumbai style attack within the United States should not be overlooked since American criminals have executed smaller but similar well-planned attacks on large numbers of their fellow citizens at school, work and play. The idea of a terrorist cell executing a multiple suspect/multiple location attack would involve a police response of coordinated effort. The primary benefit of this research is to develop a framework to collaborate and marshal law enforcement forces in a timely manner in an event of an active shooter scenario of this magnitude. A review of official policy and doctrine along with inter-local coordination will be the foundation for identifying relevant sources and materials on the armed active shooter assault. This research will also benefit homeland security practitioners and policy makers by exposing the vulnerabilities of smaller law enforcement jurisdictions (those under 100,000 in population) and assist in developing a strategic network model policy.

## **II. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

Local jurisdictions, principally those with populations below 100,000, are likely to face a broadening spectrum of events that will challenge them at their core foundations. Emerging research has demonstrated that these populations are more vulnerable to suffer from administrative and operational capacities, especially during an event involving a multiple shooter and multiple locations. This type of attack on American soil is an imminent threat, and its implications must be understood in order to prepare for and respond effectively to it. By examining various types of literature, an exploration into the importance of enhancing cooperation among local law enforcement agencies when called upon to deal with these types of active shooter scenarios was reviewed. Specifically the literature focused on the following three categories: 1) official policy and doctrine; 2) a historical perspective of active shooter incidents; and 3) of inter-local cooperation.

### **B. OFFICIAL POLICY AND DOCTRINE**

The terror attacks of September 11, 2001, brought about a large body of official policy and doctrine; however, in all the verbiage coming out of federal and state officialdom, none of the policies or doctrine addressed scenarios like those that unfolded in Mumbai, India,<sup>1</sup> or Beslan, Russia.<sup>2</sup> Homeland Security Presidential Directive-5 (HSPD-5) suggested the development of a National Incident Management System (NIMS) to guide the response to domestic incidents “regardless of cause, size, or complexity” (White House, 2003). HSPD-5 was created to progress the nation’s capacity

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<sup>1</sup> On November 26, 2008, approximately 10 well-armed terrorists, operating in teams of two, began a series of multiple terrorist attacks in the commercial center of Mumbai, India. Up to five “soft target” locations were targeted, 172 people were killed and at least 327 were injured (Rabasa, 2009)

<sup>2</sup> On September 1, 2004, a group of over 30 radical Islamist terrorists took more than 1,000 children, teachers and parents hostage in a school in Beslan, North Ossetia. The attackers, armed with guns and explosives, took siege of the school for three days, killing over 300 people (Cohen, 2004)



to respond to domestic incidents. Under the subsequent policies spawned by HSPD-5, the federal government is to treat crisis management and consequence management as a single, integrated function, rather than two separate functions.

The HSPD-5 merger of terrorist attacks with natural or man-made disasters failed to differentiate the importance and variance in response to an incident in progress from mitigation or the subsequent after effects of the active shooter event. The National Response Plan (NRP), first promulgated in 2004 and then replaced by the National Response Framework (NRF) in March of 2008, focused primarily on terror attacks associated with weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and preventive measures to minimize the impact of such attacks (DHS, 2008). As comprehensive as these documents might be, these documents fail to address issues associated with attacks other than those manifested as WMD, especially if prevention fails.

The National Planning Scenarios, which provide a structure for capabilities-based planning for all levels of government, neglect requirements for a tactical response resolution of an ongoing situation or events in progress (DHS, 2005). The planning scenarios may be appropriate for large jurisdictions (populations greater than 100,000), but the scenarios are of little practical value for smaller jurisdictions (Clovis, 2008). While the efforts of prevention and consequence management are important, policy and directives need to be developed to address what happens when these efforts fail. These policies need to address probable events at the local level, particularly when resources and capacities are likely to be overwhelmed by events like those that took place in Mumbai, Beslan and even within the United States, the event at Ft. Hood.<sup>3</sup> Ft. Hood demonstrated that we will face enemies that must be engaged, and a response like this requires a very different framework from the ones presented.

### **C. HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

In an article for the National Institute of Justice entitled *Preventing, Preparing for Critical Incidents in Schools*, Beth Schuster examined school shootings (2009). With the

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<sup>3</sup> On November 5, 2009, a U.S. Army major and American-born Muslim, opened fire at the Fort Hood, Texas, military base killing 13 people and wounding 43 others (Miles, 2010).

10-year anniversary of the Columbine High School Shooting<sup>4</sup> passing, which revolutionized police response tactics to an active shooter protocol, the article focused on the preparedness of schools and school resource officers. Schuster found that statistically, shootings and other homicides are a rare event in U.S. schools, accounting for less than one percent of homicides among children aged five through 18. However, in a national survey of more than 750 school resource officers, about half of the officers said the emergency plans for their schools were not adequate (Schuster, 2009, 44). Some 66 percent further indicated that emergency plans were not practiced on a regular or ongoing basis (Schuster, 2009, 44). Susan Rosegrant's 2004 *The Shootings at Columbine High School: Responding to a New Kind of Terrorism* describes the criticisms leveled against first responders. The article focuses on lessons learned from such tragic events and the measures first responders have taken to remedy similar circumstances (Rosegrant, 2004). Specifically, Rosegrant stated that the Columbine school shooting demonstrated that there was insufficient congruence in the common practice of awaiting special weapons and tactics (SWAT) units and the practice of containment, negotiation, and intelligence gathering (Rosegrant, 2004). In September of 2007, the state of New Jersey issued a report, entitled *K-12 School Security Task Force Report*, to clarify policies for rapid response to an active shooter situation similar to Columbine (New Jersey School Security Task Force, 2007). The report focused on student violence caused by disgruntled or disturbed students. Most critically, the report requires various local, county and state agencies whose jurisdictions and authority impact school security to work together (New Jersey School Security Task Force, 2007). The task force identified best practices to address: bomb threats, evacuations, active shooters, lockdowns and public information. The task force then recommended that the Attorney General distribute these model policies to all state law enforcement agencies to modify to their needs and resources (New Jersey School Security Task Force, 2007).

Active shooter response operations have been studied in various drill exercises. One such drill, active shooter drill, was conducted by the Hood River County Sheriff's

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<sup>4</sup> On April 20, 1999, two students of Columbine High School (Littleton, Colorado), embarked on a school shooting killing 12 students, one teacher and injuring 21 others (Columbine High School Shootings, 2000).

Department, Oregon (Hood River County, 2008). The U.S. DHS/Federal Emergency Management Agency's national online network of lessons learned has the completed report. The sheriff found that the major strengths identified during the exercise were: improved multi-agency coordination; improved familiarity between law enforcement and school and an overall better sense of awareness achieved by all agencies involved. The primary areas for improvement were: improving the response plan to an active shooter; enhancing training on new procedures and identification of equipment deficiencies.

The RAND Corporation, as documented in its Occasional Papers series, conducted a study on the Mumbai terrorist attacks (2009). Analysts at RAND found that one of the most important lessons was the continuing importance of the firearms assault. A firearms assault is a category of threat that includes a range of weapons and tactics traditionally associated with terrorist activities. This includes, but is not limited to, semi-automatic firearms, improvised explosive devices (IED) and suicide bombers. The report contents included identification of inadequate counterterrorist training and equipment of local police as a contributory factor to a less than optimal outcome. In the report's key judgments, RAND researchers called for "strengthened counterterrorist capabilities on the part of first responders" (RAND Corporation, 2009).

New York City Police Department (NYPD) Commissioner Raymond Kelly gave testimony to the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs in reference to the lessons learned from the Mumbai attacks (Kelly, 2009). Kelly stated that in an active shooter incident the greatest number of casualties occurs in the first few minutes and that local police need to engage the assailants as soon as possible. In Mumbai, the police were not adequately armed nor were they trained for that type of assault. Kelly pointed out that the NYPD has now taken steps to train recruits in the use of heavy weapons and the kind of close quarter battle techniques employed in Mumbai. Furthermore, Kelly found, through tactical drill and tabletop exercises, that the Emergency Service Unit (ESU, NYPD's version of SWAT) would be spread "too thinly" in the event of multiple simultaneous attacks and that if the attack was prolonged like Mumbai, that qualified relief of his ESU personnel would need to be found (Kelly, 2009).

#### **D. INTER-LOCAL COOPERATION**

When the 9/11 Commission published its findings in the *9/11 Commission Report: Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (Report)*, commission members made many recommendations, two of which are important observations regarding the limitations of local government with respect to the terrorist attacks: 1) the lack of radio interoperability hindered proper coordination of police and fire personnel and; 2) the resources of local jurisdictions were overwhelmed where the hijacked airliners crashed (Kean & Hamilton, 2004). While no emergency response is flawless, the *Report* acknowledged three reasons why the Pentagon response was mainly successful: 1) strong professional relationships established among emergency responders; 2) adoption of the Incident Command System (ICS) and 3) the pursuit of a regional approach to response (Kean & Hamilton, 2004).

Ironically, poorly coordinated planning and execution efforts were still a factor during Hurricane Katrina, a natural disaster occurring four years after 9/11. According to the White House Homeland Security Council's documentation entitled *The Federal Response to Hurricane Katrina: Lessons Learned* (2006):

The disaster was not isolated to one town or city, or even one State. Individual local and State plans, as well as relatively new plans created by the Federal government since the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, failed to adequately account for widespread or simultaneous catastrophes.

A number of documents point out the typical inadequacy of staffing of local level government agencies and the need to develop cooperative agreements that can assist in building a regional response. Samuel Clovis, in his report *Promises Unfulfilled: The Sub-Optimization of Homeland Security National Preparedness*, states that capacities of most small communities/jurisdictions are significantly reduced and that jurisdictions need to cooperate (2008). Bickers and Stein demonstrated in their report entitled *Inter-Local Cooperation and the Distribution of Federal Grant Awards* that it is not uncommon for jurisdictions to engage in mutual aid agreements to resolve this problem of limited resources (2004). John Giduck pointed out in his book *Terror at Beslan* the need to combine forces (2005). Giduck stresses that local law enforcement is under-staffed and

under-funded at a time in which they are being called upon to not only fight crime but also terrorism. He further states that local jurisdictions need to train with sister jurisdictions that will likely respond to a critical incident together and further develop incident command systems together (Giduck, 2005). The Virginia Tech Review Panel Report reinforced this point and credited the frequent training between the Virginia Tech Police Department and the Blacksburg Police Department as critical for the high level of coordination and response to the Virginia Tech Shooting<sup>5</sup> (Virginia Tech Review Panel Report, 2007, p. 11).

For smaller jurisdictions with resource constraints, overcoming the barrier of cooperation is essential. Developing cooperation need not be formalized in mutual aid agreements, memorandums of understandings (MOU) or in joint powers agreements. Agranoff and McGuire, in the article *American Federalism and the Search for Models of Management*, developed contemporary intergovernmental management models that seem best suited for application to requesting and retaining help from other jurisdictions (2001). Specifically, Agranoff and McGuire's jurisdiction model seems most appropriate for this approach. The jurisdiction model asks that jurisdictions identify gaps in their capacities through a strategic planning process. The next step is to locate those capacities in surrounding jurisdictions then work to make arrangements to gain access to those resources in times of need. Though much of the national literature suggests regionalization to achieve this type of outcome, Clovis refutes (2008). He states that regionalization is really not part of the American inter-local landscape and that application of Agranoff and McGuire's network model is adequate enough to handle the existing capability gaps (Clovis, 2008). These network arrangements allow cooperation and collaboration without the expenditure of own-source revenues (Agranoff & McGuire, 2001; Clovis, 2008).

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<sup>5</sup> On April 16, 2007, student Seung Hui Cho shot to death 32 students and faculty of Virginia Tech University, wounded 17 more, and then killed himself (Virginia Tech Review Panel, 2007).

## **E. CHAPTER SUMMARY / CONCLUSION**

In summary, the literature review identified relevant sources and materials on the importance of an armed attack. While an armed assault is not as deadly as mass-casualty bombings, it is an effective tactic in creating prolonged chaos in an urban setting. One of the main lessons learned from the Mumbai attacks is that a small number of trained and determined attackers with unsophisticated weapons can do great damage (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2009). Strategic Forensic, Inc. (STRATFOR), a private company that provides strategic intelligence analysis, has long held that the United States is vulnerable to armed attacks against soft targets because the citizens live in an open society, making it impossible to protect everything (Burton, 2009). As these types of attacks increase in nature, the local police officer has to begin to change. These changes should include tactics and equipment equivalent to a militaristic dynamic (La Carte, 2001–2002). Jenkins found in a Rand Corporation study that the masterminds of the Mumbai attacks displayed sophisticated strategic thinking in their choice of targets and their efforts to achieve multiple objectives (2009). The Mumbai attackers analyzed the security in place, devised new tactics and did the unexpected. Terrorists and their methods change in form in order to find new ways to survive and better project the strengths of the terrorists against the weaknesses of opposing civilizations.

A strong consensus of the literature was that multiple simultaneous attacks will test the ability of local departments to coordinate actions with supporting agencies against a significant opponent. As demonstrated in the national policies and doctrine, focus is primarily extended on explosives and WMD. It would be a big mistake if law enforcement continues to view terrorist attacks as improbable and eliminate the need to make severe alteration in the operations of local police departments. Terrorists walk among us and their acts of terrorism can happen anywhere in America.

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### **III. DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **A. INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this research was to identify the most effective and efficient ways to increase law enforcement capacity of local jurisdictions, especially those with populations under 100,000, to manage the ever-growing threats posed by active shooters and the threat of asymmetric warfare within the United States. Since there is no current national strategy or policy to address this concern, this thesis uses a variety of approaches to identify smart practices and strategies. An analysis of existing literature related to the subject is used to establish a baseline understanding of not only the nature of the problem but its depth and breadth. Case studies of four high-profile events and interviews of individuals that have experience with responding to active shooter scenarios were then used to develop contextual themes and lessons learned so other agencies could better prepare for future incidents. Specifically, the preparation will require changes in training not only within a police agency but also with surrounding agencies since resource acquisition and management for those populations under 100,000 diminish quickly when large scale events occur.

#### **B. ANALYSIS OF LITERATURE**

Existing literature on active shooter scenarios was examined, focusing on the following three categories: 1) official policy and doctrine; 2) a historical perspective of active shooter incidents and 3) inter-local cooperation. These three areas were used to explore what other writers/researchers have observed.

#### **C. CASE STUDIES**

The case study methodology was used because active shooter scenarios contain numerous lessons that can be learned from just one event. A multiple shooter, multiple location scenario is so complex that by only breaking the event down to its crucial elements and examining its many parts, will one truly understand its magnitude of



information. While no single scenario is the same, there are fundamental themes that carry across each incident. A dissection of actual events helped to identify problems that were encountered. Case studies offer the following advantages: 1) they involve real-life scenarios, 2) they require an isolation of key issues involved, 3) they look to identify appropriate strategies for the resolution that led to the demise/success of a particular incident and 4) they bring forth recommendations in which a best practice resolution is involved. The cases that were selected for examination were chosen based on two criteria: 1) the event garnered national attention and 2) the incident altered existing policies and practices. Specifically, an examination of two international and two national incidents were completed.

The case studies included 1) Mumbai, India 2008; 2) Beslan, Russia 2004; 3) North Hollywood, California 1997 and 4) Columbine, Colorado 1999. Each event has brought about new challenges in the response of local law enforcement and to the existing capacities of the affected jurisdictions. News articles, journals, books, official reports and government reviews relating to these incidents were critiqued to establish themes for analysis. Background, documented lessons learned and actions that were taken by the agency involved since the initial incident were analyzed to identify factors that inhibit or incentivize a common lexicon and protocols for active shooter scenarios.

#### **D. INTERVIEWS**

Often, reasons contributing to success or failure of active shooter response as well as factors that inhibit or promote cooperation are not freely available in written documentation due to liability issues. Therefore, interviews of law enforcement officers were invaluable. Interviews were performed because they are more conducive than a survey for the purpose of allowing the interviewee to bring forth and elaborate on areas of concern.

The individuals selected for interviews met one or more of the following criteria:

1. Sworn law enforcement officials who were involved in an active shooter scenario

2. Representative from the department that was and/or is responsible for the policy or procedures for this type of event

Specifically, interviewees were selected from the United States case studies that were examined in this thesis. The following people were interviewed for this research:

1. Kate Battan—Homicide Investigator, Jefferson County Sherriff's Office, Golden, Colorado—involved in Columbine School Shooting.
2. Steve Gomez—Sergeant Metropolitan Division SWAT, Los Angeles Police Department—involved in North Hollywood Bank Shoot Out
3. Glenn Grove—Investigator Environmental Crimes Unit and Bomb Squad, Jefferson County Sherriff's Office, Golden, Colorado—involved in Columbine School Shooting
4. Joe Witty—Police Officer Metropolitan Division SWAT, Los Angeles Police Department—involved in North Hollywood Bank Shoot Out

The interview questions focused on identifying the lessons learned, departmental limitations, policy regulations and strategies that were in place prior to and after the incident. Specific structured questions were asked of each interviewee; however, an unstructured format was also followed allowing for elaboration and probing into areas of interest.

Standard questions were provided to the interviewee (see Appendix A) in advance of the established interview date/time. During the interviews, additional focus was made on identifying ways in which their law enforcement agencies enhanced their capacities, training and tactics since their involvement in a complex active shooter scenario.

The interviews were conducted telephonically based upon conditions agreed upon prior to the interview. Each interview was audio recorded for the purpose of preserving the integrity of quotes and information that were used in the compilation of this thesis. All direct quotes and circumstances where the interviewee was identified were approved by the interviewee prior to publication of these findings.

## **E. DATA ANALYSIS**

Qualitative research is a type of research whose findings are not arrived at by statistical procedures or other means of quantitative measures (Strauss & Corbin, 1990,

pp. 10–11). It is concerned with the richness of raw data and seeks to develop insights and generalizations out of the data collected (Neuman, 2003, p. 149). The key to understanding qualitative research lies with the idea that meaning is socially constructed by individuals in interaction with their world. By using qualitative methods, this thesis constructs meaning from previous events to gain insight into what interpretations are at a particular point in time. Since qualitative research involves data collection and data analysis to occur simultaneously, data analysis was an ongoing process throughout the preparation of this thesis.

Hindsight is a colossal advantage from which law enforcement agencies benefit because often, split-second decisions do not always lead to best solutions. While it is easy to criticize an event, making instantaneous decisions is a difficult task in which instincts, prior training and knowledge come into play. Police agencies commonly examine serious attacks, whether criminal or terrorist related, for details in counteracting the strategy and tactics employed in hopes of informing, educating and developing a best response.

The qualitative analysis for this thesis involved the identification of themes found within the literature, case studies and interviews. The themes, which are identified in the analysis chapter of this thesis, set to identify the training and tactics, involved in complex and multiple active shooter scenarios, can enhance cooperation among local law enforcement agencies in bridging the gap in response capacities and preparedness. The expectation of this process was to discover a means to build networks and improve capacities of smaller local jurisdictions so that the lessons learned can foster smart practices. Eugene Bardach describes smart practice research as any practice that encompasses something “clever” that once analyzed, is applicable to local situations (2000, p. 71). Smart practices in the police field can be found by analyzing solutions derived by the jurisdictions that experienced the problem and evaluating their applicability to the rest of the law enforcement community.

## **IV. CASE STUDIES**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter examines specific events that garnered international and national attention and describes not only the incident but the lessons learned from such events and how those lessons address the research and subsidiary questions. The four cases examined were: 1) Mumbai, India 2008; 2) Beslan, Russia 2004; 3) North Hollywood, California 1997 and 4) Columbine, Colorado 1999. Internationally, the Mumbai attacks and the Beslan massacre were selected because both incidents were of a magnitude not yet encountered within the United States. Although the police forces in India and Russia are very different from the United States, by dissecting the Mumbai attacks and the Beslan massacre, gaps can be identified in our nation's preparedness to meet a paramilitary attack on United States soil. Within the United States, the North Hollywood bank shooting and the Columbine school shooting cases were probed so that a correlation to these foreign cases can be established.

This chapter includes background information on the event, lessons learned based on research conducted after the event and measures taken since the event by the agencies involved in deterring and responding more effectively and efficiently to another event of that magnitude. The information learned in these case studies is essential to identifying the themes documented within the analysis chapter of this research.

### **B. MUMBAI**

#### **1. Background**

On November 26, 2008, multiple sites in the Indian city of Mumbai were attacked with bombs and gunfire in coordinated terrorist attacks that lasted three days. According to reports based on the investigation, the attackers boarded a small boat in Karachi, Pakistan on November 22, 2008, and after traveling a short distance, hijacked an Indian fishing vessel and killed the four crew members (Sengupta, 2009). Upon arrival in

Mumbai, the 10 attackers divided into four attack teams, each engaging in sequential attacks on separate locations, including Mumbai's main train station and the Trident-Oberoi and Taj Mahal Palace Hotels (Rabassa, 2009, pp. 5–6). Each terrorist was armed with a weapons pack: a Kalashnikov, a nine-millimeter pistol, ammunition, hand grenades and a bomb containing a military-grade explosive, steel ball bearings and a timer with instructions inscribed in Urdu (Sengupta, 2009). The police were armed with riot gear of lathis (batons), gas guns and .303 rifles (High Level Enquiry Committee {HLEC}, 2008, Sec. 1, 32.1). The police lacked adequate protective gear, specifically bulletproof vests or other equipment to withstand grenade attacks (HLEC, 2008, Sec. 1, 32.2). Home Minister Shivraj Patil reportedly ordered the deployment of India's elite National Security Guard commandos after 90 minutes into the attacks (Kronstadt, 2008, 2). The unit, composed of 56 members, had only 24 bulletproof vests and did not arrive to the scene until the next morning, which was 10 hours after the initial shooting. Most importantly, the unit had no firing practice since September 27, 2007, due to a shortage of ammunition (HLEC, 2008, Sec. 1, 35). According to a high ranking Mumbai police official, the attackers made no demands and had killed most of the hostages before being engaged by the military the next morning (The Times of India, 2008). The terrorist attacks lasted for 60 hours until the capture of the lone surviving terrorist, Mohammad Ajmal Kasab, at the Taj Mahal Palace Hotel by Indian security forces. The attacks resulted in the deaths of at least 166 people (Rabassa, 2009, p. 1).

## **2. Lessons Learned**

The Mumbai attacks are noteworthy because of the tactics that were employed by the terrorists. The producers of the attacks displayed sophisticated strategic thinking in their determination of specific targets and their ability to achieve multiple objectives (Jenkins, 2009, p. 1). The masterminds learned from past mistakes and instead of planting bombs in trains (as in the 2006 attacks) and detonating car bombs (as in the 1993 attacks), they had gunmen attack train stations and seize hotels where they set fires (Jenkins, 2009, p. 2). The attacks were sequential and mobile, but most of all, simple—armed assaults, hostage and barricaded situations. The tactics used are a reminder that

the U.S. government and law enforcement may be directing its training and education efforts in the wrong direction. It demonstrates that the local police departments will assume a much larger role than previously anticipated, and that role encompasses connecting what the military refers to as means (tactics) with the end (strategy). Once the attacks began, local law enforcement tried to take preventive action; however, it lacked the manpower to sustain the increased security needed. The call for assistance resulted in a less than rapid response from the military forces, which took several days to arrive. There was an apparent lack of readiness by local responders to quickly neutralize the situation.

The terrorist shooters demonstrated refined strategic thinking, operational situational awareness and tactical adaptability. The coordinators behind the attack executed a plan for which the authorities were not prepared. It has been proven time and again that terrorists choose their targets deliberately based on the weaknesses they observe in their opponents defense and preparation. One of the many imperative lessons learned from the Mumbai attacks relates to the importance and effectiveness of the terrorist firearm assault. The Mumbai attack demonstrated that the firearms assault should be considered a valuable tactic for the terrorists in creating extended extensive chaos in an urban setting—an event that is clearly within the asymmetric warfare definition.

According to newspaper reports, the Mumbai attacks were not a surprise (Shankar, 2008). Reports from fisherman, the Home Ministry and foreign and domestic intelligence agencies all recorded strange actions and warning, which were not acted upon (Magnier, 2008). The domestic Intelligence Bureau issued warnings; however, the National Security Guard (NSG) still took 10 hours to respond, mostly because there was no military aircraft available to transport (Magnier, 2008). Since other responsibilities of the NSG include the protection of key political figures, its resources were thinned during their response to Mumbai. Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh announced that four NSG hubs would be established to counter terrorist activities (Shankar, 2008).

### **3. Measures Taken**

The police and internal security system of India is highly fragmented. States and the central government agencies frequently compete over resources, which leads to a lack of cooperation (India Today, 2009). Much of the government security systems are understaffed, undertrained and technologically insufficient.

Since the Mumbai attacks, India has taken steps to revamp their security to prevent similar incidents. According to Palaniappan Chidambaram, the Home Minister, one of the most salient steps was an expansion of the police force. Chidambaram stated, “There is no substitute for the policeman who walks the streets. The failure to perform essential police functions is where the rot began and that is where the rot lies even today” (Page, 2009). Funding has been made available to modernize the police force. The money is geared for new weapons including automatic weapons with lasers; however, the vital push towards enhancing police skill sets and institutional capabilities has still been overlooked. Mumbai police did not receive any actual simulated training in facing terrorist attacks or hostage situations (HLEC, 2008, Sec. 1, 35). Effective training programs and response protocols take years to develop. Unfortunately, this means that results are not apparent on commencement and, therefore, less attractive to administrations. Under-equipped and under-trained police proved unable to respond in the first few hours of the attack, regrettably the time in which most lives were lost.

### **C. BESLAN**

#### **1. Background**

On September 1, 2004, a group of over 30 radical Islamist terrorists took more than 1,000 children, teachers and parents, hostage in Beslan, North Ossetia (Cohen, 2004). Beslan is an agricultural and industrial community of 40,000 people and is considered a small, relatively poor community within Russia (Giduck, 2005, p. 111). According to police documents, in August of 2004, the head of security of the North Ossetian police received a report from an informant that a group of Chechens were planning a terrorist act involving children (Satter, 2009). The report was not acted upon.

Further reports about preparations for a terrorist act in North Ossetia were consistently received with the last one coming on September 1, 2004, at 5 a.m., stating that there were plans by terrorists on that day to seize a school in Beslan (Satter, 2009). Instead of increasing security, one officer was assigned to the school (Osborn, 2005). Once the school was overtaken, and it was known that hostages were within, initial police response failed to undertake rescue operations. According to a top military commander, “there was no planning to rescue hostages,” which was evident when during the first 48 hours of the siege; the main special forces were still training 18 miles away (Cohen, 2004). The attackers herded the captives to the school gym and deployed explosives around the school, hanging some from the basketball nets (Cohen, 2004, p. 1). Armed with guns, the terrorists held at bay all police forces and military for three days, killing over 329 people (Walsh, 2004). The event ended in a shoot out, with one official terrorist survivor (Plater-Zyberk, 2004).

## **2. Lessons Learned**

Terrorists choose their targets deliberately, partly based on the weaknesses they observe in our defenses and in our preparations. Another part is based on the symbolism of the target. In Beslan, the target was a school. Schools educate the next generation and produce our future leaders. A terrorist attack on a school symbolizes our inability to safeguard our prize possession in life—our children and the future society.

According to reports, the initial failure in the Beslan School massacre occurred with the local authorities and their unsuccessful execution of an effective anti-terrorism strategy (Forster, 2006). Specifically, Russian security forces neglected to deter incursion or increase protection of potential targets when supplied intelligence information relating to a possible attack. Secondly, when the terrorists actively began executing hostages, an immediate response was warranted; however, there was no police response. Three reasons as to “why not”: 1) then President Putin was not around to issue any orders, 2) police forces on site were limited in resources and preparedness, and 3) on-site leaders believed an attack would initiate the killing of all the hostages (Forster, 2006, p. 4).



Local authorities neglected to have appropriate response plans in place. They were ill-equipped, inadequately staffed and unprepared, even though they received intelligence indicating an elevated threat level. Another key weakness was the lack of coordination between police, army, and Special Forces. A contributory factor may be the fact that each entity is under the control of either the Federal Security Service (FSB) or several different ministries. Beslan demonstrated that poor multi-agency coordination hinders effective assessment and response to a critical incident. When the Russian military responded to the scene, local assistance was disregarded. The FSB did not seek a briefing from the previous commander nor local knowledge of the environment.

The Russian military was not without its share of the blame. Its first and most important failure was its lack of preparation to have a strategy in place to infiltrate the school once the Russian government approved the order for a military assault (Eyal, 2004). Ultimately, their response was not the calculated operational swarming tactic expected from a trained military.

### **3. Measures Taken**

The Beslan school massacre demonstrated that well-trained, multiple shooters present a range of substantially varied problems for first responders (McDaniel, 2009, p. 21). There is an increased need for change in cooperation and tactics. President Putin admitted that authorities underestimated the danger of what was taking place in Russia and the world and reportedly stated, “We exhibited weakness, and the weak are beaten” (Lynch, 2005, p. 153). The first identifiable failing is that the multiplicity of various security forces led to problems within command and control, cohesiveness amongst them and poor communications. At least four agencies claimed to be in charge; however, no one was and no one wanted to be. Contingency planning for an assault should have involved more than tactical familiarization with the area of operations. A well-trained military or law enforcement responders trained and experienced in asymmetric warfare situations was required.

Russia has taken steps to improve prevention and mitigation, the most important being the need for stronger local control and decision making (McDaniel, 2009, p. 30).

With terrorism still an increased threat in Russia, the government is taking rigorous and comprehensive measures to deter terrorist attacks and keep the public calm. In 2005, Russia increased its spending on combating terrorism by 27 percent (Afzal, n.d.). The Russian army was forced to cooperate more closely with other power organizations operating in the region (Plater-Zyberk, 2004, p. 8). President Putin took steps to encourage coordination between the government and local forces. Security remains incomparable to any other issue; therefore, President Putin is relying on appointed security managers and professionals to further his agenda.

## **D. NORTH HOLLYWOOD BANK SHOOTOUT**

### **1. Background**

On February 28, 1997, two men, Larry Phillips, Jr. and Emil Matasareanu, robbed the Bank of America in North Hollywood, California. North Hollywood is a district in the San Fernando Valley in the city of Los Angeles. It has a population of approximately 87,000 and is 5.87 square miles (North Hollywood Shootout, n.d.). The robbers, wearing full body armor from neck to toe, were armed with the following: three Romanian AIM rifles, an HK91 rifle, an AR-15 rifle, a .38 caliber revolver, two 9 mm Beretta 92F pistols, and over 3,300 rounds of ammunition (North Hollywood Shootout, n.d.). Patrol officers noticed Phillips and Matasareanu entering the bank wearing ski masks and used their police radios to notify the communications center and request assistance. Police officers began to arrive on scene and approximately 15 officers were surrounding each of the four corners of the building prior to the robbers attempt to leave the bank (LAPD, 1997a). The robbers, who had committed bank robberies together in the past, spent a half hour inside the bank trying to maximize their score. While Matasareanu searched for more money, Phillips looked outside the bank's front door and observed the police, dozens surrounding the building. Phillips started firing at officers as he emerged from the bank. Several officers were wounded and immediately utilized their police radios to request more assistance. Police from all over Los Angeles were summoned to the scene, and it is estimated that over 370 officers responded (Coffin, 2007). A shootout between

the officers and robbers ensued for close to an hour, and ultimately ended with the injury to 12 officers, two civilians and the demise of the two robbers (North Hollywood Shootout, n.d.).

## **2. Lessons Learned**

Uniformed patrol officers observing the robbers entering the bank and instantaneously communicating those observations resulted in a direct response of 15 patrol officers deployed around each of the four sides of the bank. Since the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) has the distinct advantage of a large department (approximately 9,912 sworn police officers (LAPD, 2010)), they were able to flood the area with police officers and contain the robbers within the bank area on the onset of the shooting. It was apparent that Phillips and Matasareanu were attempting to breach an escape route through uniformed containment; however, due to the large response, the focus was not on specific targets but on the crowd of police and gunfire received.

SWAT team actions were paramount in the successful neutralization of Phillips and Martasareanu. The single most important component was the ability to respond to the scene with all necessary weaponry and body armor. Secondly, their response time of 19 minutes was unprecedented (LAPD, 1997b, p. 4). The initial patrol officers that were on scene were only armed with Beretta 92FS 9 mm pistols, .38 revolvers, and Ithaca 12-gauge pump-action shotguns (LAPD, 1997a, p. 1). Their weapons were ineffective in neutralizing the robbers since the bullets were unable to penetrate the body armor of the outlaws. Each time officers shot at or towards one of the suspects, it provoked a hail of gunfire in their direction from the perpetrators. The SWAT officers, on the other hand, were equipped with MP5s, M26s, H&K .223 caliber assault rifles and AR 15s—weapons and ammunition to match the tactical problem presented to them.

Another distinct advantage of SWAT officers was their ability to resort to their training and team concept of staying together as a unified force. They deployed as teams working as one, letting their training dictate their actions, which allowed them to immediately recognize the tactical solution.

### **3. Measures Taken**

The North Hollywood incident demonstrated to LAPD that their patrol weapons were ineffective. Since the shoot-out, they have taken steps to enhance the weaponry from shotguns to semi-automatic weapons by indoctrinating the Urban Police Rifles (UPR), specifically M-16, into the patrol arsenal. While not a mandated piece of equipment, patrol officers have the ability to familiarize and qualify with the weapon so that it may be accessible to them and at their disposal within their patrol vehicles during their tour of duty.

While at the time of this event, patrol officers were not trained in any type of active shooter situation, policy changes have been put into effect. SWAT officers are tasked with the training of this essential skill which involves teaching patrol officers how to combat a situation as small teams. LAPD does not limit this training to just its own personnel and invites outside agencies to train with them. Most recently, LAPD has implemented a new set of training entitled Multi Assault Counter Terrorism Action Capabilities (MACTAC). The training is designed to prepare law enforcement officers to immediately deploy a team with the ability to locate and neutralize violent assaults and or terrorists acts involving numerous locations. This course of instruction is open to all police agencies in California, for a fee.

## **E. COLUMBINE HIGH SCHOOL SHOOTING**

### **1. Background**

On April 20, 1999, two students, Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold, perpetrated an armed assault on Columbine High School. Columbine High School is an upper-middle class suburban school located in Jefferson County, Colorado, with an average enrollment of 2,000 students (Erickson, 2001, p. 9). On that infamous day, Harris and Klebold were armed with the following: dozens of explosive devices of varying potency, seven knives, two Savage-Stevens 12 gauge double-barrel shotguns with the barrels shortened, a 9 mm semiautomatic assault pistol, a 9 mm semiautomatic carbine rifle, and an abundant supply of ammunition for all the firearms (Erickson, 2001, pp. 23–24). After a year of planning,

the two intended to kill hundreds of their fellow students by detonating explosive devices within the school and then shooting the fleeing survivors. Instead, the explosives failed to detonate. Harris and Klebold began firing their first shots from outside of the school at students sitting in the exterior of the cafeteria (Erickson, 2001, p. 26). They then entered the school and continued their killing spree. According to a timeline of events, the first shots were fired at 11:19 am, the last victim was killed at 11:35 am, and the two committed suicide at 12:08 pm (Columbine High School Shootings, 2000). The school massacre resulted in more than 20 people seriously injured, 12 students and one teacher dead, and the suicides of Harris and Klebold (Columbine High School Shootings, 2000).

## **2. Lessons Learned**

History demonstrates that law enforcement has been a step behind societal trends. The relevance of tactical teams was not apparent until the incident involving Charles Whitman and the Texas Tower.<sup>6</sup> Law enforcement agencies learned from this mistake and expanded their force to include Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) teams to deal with these critical “out of the ordinary” incidents. With the advent of SWAT came the mindset that time was on the side of law enforcement. So policy and procedure for first responders was to hold the perimeter (isolation), wait for backup of SWAT units (containment) and have specially trained officers negotiate with the perpetrator (negotiation) until the situation called for force entry (Borsch, 2007). The need for SWAT has been proven time and again throughout history; however, it was not until the massacre at Columbine, did this procedure appear fruitless. The lack of immediate response by arriving officers was speculated as being the reason for the large number of casualties, even though the officers acted as they were trained. According to the report of the Jefferson County Sheriff’s Office, School Resource Officer (SRO) Neil Gardner exchanged gunfire with Harris; however, the gunfire was from 60 yards away and SRO

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<sup>6</sup> On August 1, 1966, Charles Whitman, armed with a small arsenal, which contained three rifles, a sawed off shotgun, two handguns and hundreds of rounds of ammunition, ascended the University of Texas at Austin’s 27 story clock tower (Macleod, n.d.). Once in position, he fired unimpeded for 96 minutes killing 14 people and injuring 32 others (Macleod, n.d.). All active police officers in Austin were ordered to the tower. Off-duty officers along with Travis County Sheriff’s deputies and Texas Department of Public Safety troopers also converged on the area to assist and resulted in the death of Whitman (Macleod, n.d.).

Gardner never entered the school (Columbine High School Shootings, 2000). More officers arrived to the scene to assist; however, all officers remained outside the building awaiting SWAT, while the suspects continued to shoot from within the school. Columbine transformed police tactics by bringing to the forefront the fact that police departments could no longer depend on the special skills, weapons and tactics of SWAT teams in resolving incidents and that an immediate entry by initial officers in active pursuit of the suspects is paramount. Time is not on the side of police in this type of situation.

Harris and Klebold were active shooters. They were a live threat that needed to be stopped immediately by law enforcement. The lack of specialized training on the part of first responders to enter a high-risk, high-threat environment led to a less than optimal situation in which the shooters had free reign to continue their killing spree. The initial police officers created a perimeter around the school and the first entry into the school by SWAT personnel was at approximately 12:06 pm, approximately one half hour after the last victim was killed (Columbine High School Shootings, 2000).

Besides training, equipment for first responders needs to be re-examined. Firepower of criminals and terrorists has exceeded that of first responders. In the incident at Columbine, SRO Gardner was armed with only a handgun compared to Harris, who had both a semi-automatic weapon and a shotgun (Erickson, 2001, p. 68). Changing the tactics of first responders requires a change in weaponry and protective gear.

Besides the lack of tactics and equipment, the earliest problem faced by law enforcement officers was the lack of communication (Erickson, 2001, p. 13). With a multi-agency response, radio communication was nearly impossible due to the different bandwidths. With each varying systems, agencies were prevented from communicating directly with each other. Most importantly, groups with similar functions could not communicate via radio the critical information that was vital for their specific function. Each agency communicated directly with its dispatch center, who in turn communicated with the dispatch center of the other agencies involved. Ideally, a central command channel to which all agencies could report could have been beneficial.

### 3. Measures Taken

Columbine prompted the most sweeping changes in police tactics—active shooter training. Police around the country now employ contact teams, in which patrol officers band together to enter a building in formation to confront the gunman. While not a specific policy within the Jefferson County Sheriff’s Office, the training for what is called Rapid And Immediate Deployment (RAID) is part of the critical incident procedures and is taken very seriously. Since Columbine, the Jefferson County Sheriff’s Office has been involved in a hostage situation thought to have been an active shooter incident in neighboring Park County<sup>7</sup> and a lone gunman incident at Deer Creek Middle School.<sup>8</sup> They credit the lessons learned from Columbine, and the change in their tactics and training, as the factors contributing to the successful handling of these situations.

The Jefferson County Sheriff’s Office SWAT officers were approached by the National Tactical Officers Association (NTOA) to help to initially start the “active shooter” training programs that law enforcement agencies around the country have adopted (K. Battan, personal communication, July 14, 2010). The methods taught by the NTOA are varied based on agency size and location but lay the foundation of the steps that need to be taken. Usually, officers from an agency’s SWAT team are sent to the training; they, in turn, teach the members of their own team and patrol how to apply the techniques.

One of the most important equipment changes has been in the area of communication. Since Columbine, agencies within Colorado have upgraded to an 800 MHz radio system that allows for numerous shared radio communication channels in times of critical incidents. Another added piece of equipment has been for the patrol deputies, who now have the option of being trained and carrying rifles in addition to the shotgun and their sidearm.

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<sup>7</sup> On September 27, 2006, Duane Roger Morrison entered the school, took seven female students hostage and as negotiations began to falter, SWAT entered the classroom. Morrison killed one hostage and shot himself as SWAT was shooting at him (Lopez, 2007).

<sup>8</sup> On February 23, 2010, Bruco Eastwood entered the school and opened fire on two students, injuring both. He was disarmed by a teacher moments before SWAT arrival.

As far as tactics, multi-jurisdictional training to cultivate relationships with other law enforcement agencies and fire departments has been instituted. Medics have been trained with the SWAT teams and have responded to critical incidents with them. A legislative change, 19-1-304, has also happened, wherein law enforcement is now allowed to share information with the school district about juveniles (Colorado General Assembly, 2001, Chap 59, section 4, p. 138).

## **F. CONCLUSION**

Case study is a qualitative research approach in which the researcher explores in depth an event by collecting detailed information using a variety of data collection procedures (Creswell, 2003, p. 15). The data examines the interplay of all variables in order to provide as complete an understanding of an event as possible. As demonstrated in this chapter, the case studies show the descriptive, explanatory and exploratory functions of the cases involved. The lessons learned from these events are intended to be applied to a whole variety of complex governmental actions, including how these cases are the basis for significant explanations and generalizations because when rare events like these occur, they change history.



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## **V. INTERVIEWS**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

While it is easy to gather basic, generalized information on the events of the world by reading newspapers, articles and books, the real knowledge comes from those that have experienced the crisis. With qualitative research interviews, an understanding from the subjects' points of view unveils a deeper meaning of their experiences. Interviews allow people to convey to others a situation from their own perspective and in their own words. The interviews for this research were conversations with those individuals who have experienced an active shooter situation. This chapter explores the responses supplied by the four law enforcement officer interviewees: two from Jefferson County Sheriff's Department and two from Los Angeles Police Department. They were each asked structured and unstructured questions about national active shooter events with which they were involved. To these agencies, the event had to be specific to them in order to receive the monetary compensation to implement the resource changes. It was learned that once the crisis occurred, money was no object to attempt to build the capacity and resources of the police department; however, as the years passed and the event was not at the forefront, the money was redirected toward other public interests. These agencies experienced changes to their policies and procedures after their specific crisis in hopes of generalizing and institutionalizing the appropriate transformation to a strategic policy that could handle a larger array of problems. It is these changes that will be explored further within this chapter in hopes of developing a strategy for all law enforcement agencies to implement so that agencies will not train and learn in isolation.

### **B. KEY FINDINGS**

There were 21 standardized questions asked of each interviewee (see Appendix A). The interview began with the interviewees supplying demographic background on themselves and their agency, moved to their involvement in an active shooter episode,

lessons learned from the event, including changes to policy, tactics, and procedures and ended with steps their agency is taking to envision and respond to future events.

Appendix B represents a summary of selected questions asked of the participants, their responses, and conclusions that were reached by the author. The interviews helped to pinpoint definitive challenges that are inherent in this type of situation. The challenges identified from the interviews were consistent with the written documentation, specifically the after action reports. The interviewees singled out four main areas as important and still recurring: communication, weapons, response, training and exercises. These areas will be explored further in the following paragraphs.

### **1. Communication Is the Cornerstone of Command, Control, and Coordination**

With larger events, communication with other responding agencies is difficult due to different technology and a failure to incorporate a shared system. While all responding agencies should not necessarily command their units on the same channel, access to other agencies while engaged in a tactical situation is a must. Communication is not entirely a technological problem. Investigators Grove and Battan spoke about the communication problems during Columbine. Investigator Grove spoke of the lack of coordination between SWAT teams due to poor face-to-face communication. He stated that the original team was an ad-hoc team, but as additional teams from surrounding jurisdictions arrived to assist, there was no debriefing between the various agencies as to what had been searched already and what further needs to be done (G. Grove, personal communication, May 24, 2010). Investigator Battan spoke of the communication system. Communication deficiencies stemmed from resource constraints, specifically budget (K. Battan, personal communication, July 14, 2010). Alternatively, Sergeant Gomez spoke of how a well-resourced communication system in North Hollywood produced different results. Since he worked in the SWAT unit, his team was “well trained, had equipment, and knew how each other worked” (S. Gomez, personal communication, June 30, 2010). The cohesiveness led to effective communication within his own squad but not with the overall on-scene units, since Gomez reported that his police hand-held radio was never

even switched on (S. Gomez, personal communication, June 30, 2010). For Gomez, the team communication that he had from his training was more essential than any radio communication since the team communication was accomplished with non-verbal cues.

## **2. Law Enforcement Weaponry Has Been Inadequate to Address Modern Threats**

The equipment individual officers are armed with plays an integral part in their response. During the North Hollywood incident, officers from LAPD had obtained weapons and ammunition from a local gun store because of the overwhelming firepower they faced from the suspects' automatic rifles (S. Gomez, personal communication, June 30, 2010). The North Hollywood episode brought attention to the inadequacy of patrol weapons. Since that day, LAPD has added rifles to the arsenal of equipment that patrol officers are allowed to carry on the street. The caveat is that the rifles are not mandatory. This lack of regulation enables the responsibility and liability to fall to the individual officer. This also lowers the cost to the departments since they now do not have to purchase rifles and ammunition for every member. The upgrade of weapons by the LAPD took effect after the North Hollywood shooting. For the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, there was a discussion of upgrading weapons because of what had transpired in North Hollywood; however the discussion was slow and so was the adoption (G. Grove, personal communication, May 24, 2010). It was not until the event at Columbine, did the change in weapons take effect.

## **3. Plans Lacked Focus on Responses to Events Involving Multiple Agencies**

According to those interviewed, the area that has probably changed the most since their specific events was response and or planning. While the fact of the matter is that in times of crisis, all agencies will come together in an attempt to coordinate their efforts to provide services needed to the affected area, the response can become overwhelming and inadequate if not properly collaborated. With over 900 officers responding to the scene of Columbine High School and approximately 36 different police agencies, the roles and responsibilities of each were undefined. When referring to response, the underlying topic

by those interviewed appeared to be planning. There were no set response plans in place for this atypical situation that they were encountering. Those interviewed stated that the lack of plans, policies and procedures made it difficult to establish command and control. Since the Columbine incident, MOUs between local, state and federal agencies have been developed and implemented. Investigator Battan stated, “As part of our critical incident procedures, there is a system in place with defined roles for the command structure. Each of these has specific functions and responsibilities” (K. Battan, personal communication, July 14, 2010). While the MOUs do establish defined relationships, it is well understood in the Denver Metropolitan Area that not even the largest agencies can deal with another Columbine or homeland security issue on their own (G. Grove, personal communication, May 24, 2010). Mostly because these MOUs and plans are infrequent, therefore they become dated and do not incorporate lessons from recent events. Since plans are not trained fully or exercised realistically, weaknesses go unnoticed until an actual event occurs. So while MOUs are needed to lay a foundation, it is actually the informal working relationships that develop the procedures. Sergeant Gomez spoke of how LAPD has Mutual Aid Agreements with the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department but not with the surrounding smaller jurisdictions. While nothing formal is in place with the smaller agencies, if an incident occurred and assistance was requested by them, LAPD would respond (S. Gomez, personal communication, July 2, 2010). This demonstrates that informal agreements are also in place.

#### **4. Key to Refining and Inculcating New Tactics Is Training and Exercises**

The last area of focus mentioned by those interviewed, and probably the one most often overlooked, was training and exercises. Large, complex incidents are inherently challenging to manage. They impose extraordinary demands on the services that must be provided in a timely manner to the affected area. It is the hope that training and exercises will limit the problems that would be encountered and inculcate improvements across the law enforcement agencies. All those interviewed spoke about the advantages that SWAT teams have over the average police officer. For Jefferson County Sheriff’s Office, the SWAT team is multi-jurisdictional so they serve 10 of 13 cities within the county (K.

Battan, personal communication, July 14, 2010). Therefore, they establish a working relationship with 10 more agencies than the average police officer. For LAPD, being a member of the SWAT team is a full-time position. The team consists of 60 officers whose continual specialized training leaves them better prepared and equipped to handle an extraordinary situation (S. Gomez, personal communication, July 2, 2010).

According to Officer Witty, LAPD is taking steps to develop their police department. They have recently trained all able bodied sworn personnel and command staff in MAC-TAC Officer Basic Tactics (J. Witty, personal communication, July 21, 2010). LAPD is working on several major policy changes that will incorporate MAC-TAC concepts fully into their standing plans, which allows these tactics to facilitate deploying officers in response to active shooter scenarios, terrorist events and natural disasters (J. Witty, personal communication, July 21, 2010). Most importantly, the Command Staff is coordinating with the Tactical Team and the Training Division to establish ongoing, dynamic, and realistic training incorporating Scenario Based Training (J. Witty, personal communication, July 21, 2010). The ultimate goal of the MAC-TAC program is to train not only the LAPD but all law enforcement agencies to train patrol officers at a proficient level in able to locate and neutralize violent assaults and or terrorist acts (J. Witty, personal communication, July 21, 2010).

### **C. CONCLUSION**

High-profile events and the media attention that was received by these agencies generated opportunities for them to make changes. It was acknowledged by those interviewed that public fear, especially for their children, prompts politicians to support improvements and therefore generates the money to implement the programs and equipment for effective and efficient responses. Every person interviewed believed that steps have been taken to change the way in which their department operates and that these changes have led to them being more prepared. There have been steps to increase their resources by establishing MOUs, yet, they all still feel that the relationships that they are able to build on their own are the ones that increase their capacities because those are less formalized. It is the hopes of officers interviewed that the ability to

recognize the flaws that occurred during their incidents will lead to the implementation of new behaviors that will result in better outcomes in the future; however, they are fully aware that due to the myriad of threats and hazards, some programs will continue to struggle in development until another event occurs to garner the scrutiny.

## VI. ANALYSIS

### A. INTRODUCTION

As a profession, law enforcement has a great deal to learn about responding to critical incidents. The law enforcement community must be prepared to engage attackers quickly and effectively, lest they will succeed in spreading terror. One way to prepare is to identify patterns inherent in active shooter incidents. By better understanding how these events unfold, the more our first responders can learn how to achieve success, which includes saving not only their lives but the lives of others.

In the 2007 *National Strategy for Homeland Security*, the Homeland Security Council defined homeland security as an effort to prevent terrorist attacks on United States soil, reduce our vulnerability to terrorism, minimize damage and recover from attacks that do occur (2007, p. 3). The emerging threat for law enforcement agencies in this country is exemplified in the events of Mumbai and Beslan.

While it is true that we cannot prepare ourselves for every possible occurrence, the lack of training and advanced planning for major events, emergencies or terrorist attacks can prove detrimental. Several tactics employed in the Mumbai attacks and the Beslan massacre hold possible significance for United States law enforcement due to its potentially global applicability. These include selecting “soft targets”<sup>9</sup> or targets of opportunity with large crowds, multiple operatives acting simultaneously and the use of small arms and diversionary tactics. Armed assaults are not a new concept in terrorism. They have been proven to be an effective tactic since the beginning of the modern era of terrorism. The Mumbai attacks and the Beslan Massacre are reminders that this low-tech attack on “soft targets” in the United States can create high-consequence events. Particularly, schools, malls, sporting events and other high gathering places in the United States, do not have the level of physical security of many other potential targets such as government buildings and airports, which are known as “hard targets.” These attacks

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<sup>9</sup> Soft target is a military term referring to a person or thing that is relatively unprotected, undefended, or vulnerable to military or terrorist attack.



identified landmark properties that were lucrative targets with a high psychological value thus diminishing society's sense of security in their police and government.

Intelligence deficiency, insufficient counterterrorist training and equipment of local police, along with inadequate hostage-rescue plans and delays in the response of SWAT teams, all have contributed to a less-than-ideal response to the attacks in Mumbai and Beslan. These gaps suggest the need for improved counterterrorist coordination between national-level and local law enforcement agencies and for strengthened counterterrorist capabilities on the part of first responders.

The closest strategies that United States law enforcement has to answer the threats of Mumbai and Beslan are demonstrated in the incidents of Columbine and North Hollywood. Situations like these, occurring in the homeland, has led to the realization of enhanced law enforcement training and acquisition of additional equipment designed to provide first responders with the tools to stop active shooters. While both Columbine and North Hollywood dealt with disturbed individuals armed with an arsenal of weapons, situations involving well trained terrorist cells are not far behind. The theories and lessons learned from these United States cases are applicable in developing a terrorist response to incidents like Mumbai and Beslan. The following section outlines the themes that were identified in all the cases studied so that attention could be brought to law enforcement agencies as to what problems are continuously occurring and need to be addressed.

## **B. THEMES**

How local law enforcement agencies will prepare for and respond to complex active shooter scenarios in the future, whether acts of terrorism or a series of violent crimes, is a significant challenge facing the law enforcement community. This profession must sharpen its expertise to manage effectively and efficiently high-profile events successfully. While there is still much that cannot be anticipated from reviewing the case studies, literature and interviews, there were some identifiable measures that emerged as

crucial to an effective law enforcement strategy and response. These recognized themes are: planning and preparation, capacities, training/equipment, operational art and communication.

### **1. Planning and Preparation Are Needed for Regional Coordination**

Local officials need to emphasize the importance of regional coordination in developing a prepared nation. Preparedness is developed from pre-planning. Preparation and pre-event planning are critical to mobilizing resources when they are needed. By developing flexible plans to respond to any disaster, the chaos, confusion and casualties can be limited. Pre-planning identifies potential and realistic dangers.

Planning and preparedness can only occur if supported by the agency's administration. Leadership must show willingness to change and the ability to share resources. By planning, agency leaders meet and develop a familiarity, trust and an open-line of communication. Since the attacks of September 11, we have seen the nation takes steps to coordinate preparedness efforts. The problem is that no matter what steps the federal government takes, historically, it has been the state and local governments' responsibility to manage emergencies through their police, fire and emergency medical personnel. It is because of this reason that regional coordination, especially regional resources are essential. In giving testimony before the Subcommittee on Government Efficiency, Financial Management, and Intergovernmental Relations, Paul Posner (Managing Director, Federal Budget Issues, Strategic Issues) stated, "Large-scale or labor-intensive incidents quickly deplete a given locality's supply of trained responders" (2002, p. 17). Posner emphasizes the importance of regional coordination articulating that proximity allows for quick deployment and expertise (2002, p. 17). Furthermore, he acknowledges that cities have begun to extend training and equipment to neighboring municipal areas so that they can help each other (2002).

Miami Police Chief John Timoney expressed to *The Daily Beast*, "What is interesting about Mumbai is that it's not the biggest or the worst attack. So it's not the first that comes to mind as a major problem for preparation" (Posner, 2009).

Undoubtedly, it was not until his city experienced a mock exercise that demonstrated how quickly this type of attack would stretch their resources to a breaking point, did the chief realize its importance.

Agencies already develop agreements with other agencies likely to provide resources and assistance during a crisis. Upon speaking with Investigator Battan and Investigator Grove, after the Columbine incident, MOUs developed that addressed multi-jurisdictional, multi-agency response (K. Battan & G. Grove, personal communication, July 14, 2010 and May 24, 2010). Grove stated, “There is a very keen awareness that not even the largest agencies can deal with such an event on their own” (personal communication, May 24, 2010). As such, regional planning, communications and regional resource sharing is commonplace amongst the surrounding jurisdictions. Both Grove and Battan believe that their agency and area are ahead of the curve due to incidents like Columbine acting as a catalyst. They both also stressed that their agency has a strong working relationship with surrounding agencies because of their practical training exercises.

An essential part of the preplanning involves the Incident Command System (ICS) which falls under the National Incident Management System (NIMS). By design, ICS is a standardized, on-scene, all-hazards incident management approach that allows for the integration of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures and communications operating within a common organizational structure; however, upon speaking with those interviewed, to them, the system is very ineffective. Some of the reasons stated are: command staff is not adequately trained, ICS is not supported by law enforcement administration, and it is not directly applicable to law enforcement scenarios. On a major event, the different agencies set up their own incident command posts, thus not allowing for the cohesiveness in which the system is designed to achieve (G. Grove, personal communication, May 24, 2010). Multi-agency large scale exercises are hardly conducted which lends to the problem of following a central command system (G. Grove, personal communication, May 24, 2010).

## **2. Patrol Officers Capabilities Are Essential for Their Relevancy**

Capabilities are the talents, skills, knowledge, capacities and abilities that enable a person to perform with excellence. In order for police officers to remain relevant and make contributions in a world of constant change, they have to be able to upgrade their skill set and knowledge. The literature on capabilities demonstrated that active shooter response operations have been studied and the findings are that law enforcement still lacks the skill set, knowledge and capacities to handle these types of situations. Officers must be trained and mentally prepared to act immediately (G. Grove, personal communication, May 24, 2010). When the incident at Columbine happened, law enforcement agencies began to adopt and adapt rapid response training. What lacked in the policies, were mandatory recertification/refresher training. Upon speaking with Sergeant Gomez, all police recruits participate in a single day SWAT training day while in the academy, as per Police Training Commission (PTC) requirements; however, there is no further in-service training for them (personal communication, July 2, 2010). Investigator Battan explained that her agency does review critical incidents, and they participate in table-top exercises however, practical training is nonexistent (personal communication, July 14, 2010). Mumbai is an excellent example of how terrorist organizations are enhancing their capabilities by learning from past mistakes and refining their strategic thinking. The problem is that the enemy is learning from past incidents, but the police are not.

The individual officer needs to understand their capabilities and be confident in what he/she can accomplish. This is developed in active shooter training. When involved in an incident, the officer will resort to their training (J. Witty, personal communication, July 21, 2010). Training that is not frequent and realistic is an invitation for failure and liability. It emphasizes that although an agency may have the forethought to address an issue, it may be failing to adequately prepare by training its members to respond, thus incurring liability. Unless police departments continually improve the skills of their officers, their officers are quickly becoming irrelevant.

Capabilities can be further increased through coordinated regional training. Coordination through table top and practical exercises allows the practicing of scenarios and an exponential increase of resources from jurisdictional assistance.

### **3. Training and Equipment Appropriate to Address the New Threats**

While training and equipment can be sub-categories for some of the other themes, they are two important issues stressed by those interviewed and the literature to not be looked at on their own face value. Since it is not always easy to see its immediate payoff, the training budget is usually the first to get cut in times of economic trouble. The importance of training for nonroutine events is essential because it ensures that challenges faced during crises can be successfully navigated. Training is about getting people ready to execute and then putting it to the test when the organization needs it most.

What distinguishes the military and police from other professions is that most of the training that is conducted are for instances that *may* occur. Ever since Congress passed the Safe Streets Act of 1968, which provided substantial federal assistance to local law enforcement agencies for training, police officer training, especially basic training, has been viewed as a significant and ongoing issue across the country. Former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark commented on the need for increased police competence by noting, “To be truly professional, police must have high standards of education and personal competence in a wide range of subjects with continuous development and training” (Munro, 1974, p. 151). While its importance is recognized, in actuality, factors inhibit training from coming into fruition.

Budget concerns and the availability of experienced instructors are two factors that contribute to the lack of training. Cuts in federal and state funding for schools in Colorado have diminished practical exercises between the schools and law enforcement (Brown & Simpson, 2006). Considering that the Columbine school shooting was an event that changed police tactics around the United States, it is ironic that funding for that issue was transferred to improving student test scores. At the local level, law enforcement strategies and budgets are driven by what the stakeholders feel are important

at the community level. The forethought that local law enforcement plays an integral role in a domestic terrorist attack, reels no public support. The reality is if local law enforcement leaders are unable to convince key stakeholders that terrorism is a local issue and an important element of the law enforcement mission, strategies will not evolve and budgets will not be adjusted to counter the threats.

It is becoming more apparent that law enforcement is the first line of defense, and thus, the equipment they are supplied with must be more sophisticated to handle these new threats. Originally a topic of discussion amongst law enforcement administrators in the 1990s due to the North Hollywood bank shootout and Columbine school massacre, the weapons and body armor of police were proven to be outdated and inadequate. Sergeant. Gomez and Officer Witty both confirmed reports that the responding police officers that day to the North Hollywood incident were ill equipped with their 12 gauge shot guns (S. Gomez and J. Witty, personal communication, June 30, 2010 and July 21, 2010). Investigator Grove elaborated that even though officers were only equipped with their hand guns and shot guns on the day of Columbine, there was a discussion of adopting patrol rifles due to the North Hollywood shooting (personal communication, May 24, 2010). Budget issues played a role in the slow adoption and then Columbine lent to a quick change. Both agencies needed a dramatic event to change their equipment. Today, patrol officers for the Jefferson County Sheriff's Department and LAPD have the option of being trained on and carrying patrol rifles. Since September 11, police departments are becoming more militarized in terms of response and need to be more prepared. This preparation includes an increase to tactical and assault weapons along with tactical body armor consistent with the threats that the officer will face in the field.

#### **4. Develop Operational Art Within the Law Enforcement Field**

Each cop on the street must be able to transition from community police officer to high intensity operations, specifically counterterrorism and counterinsurgency. In order for your average street cop to do this, they must begin to learn more than just tactics. They must possess new knowledge in understanding conflict and develop what has been

termed “operational art.” Police operational art is defined as the “capacity to go beyond managing single tactical incidents to influencing the effects of multiple incidents in multiple locations over time” (Sullivan, 2009, p. 4). Current U.S. police practice and policy concerns itself with tactics. Law enforcement train for tactical response because they operate in limited time and space, responding reactively to “calls for service” and focus on a “beat” or neighborhood. Large situations, especially those involving an opposing force with multiple areas and points of contact, require the following:

- sophisticated coordination,
- collaboration of police and non-government resources,
- intelligence information,
- incident command and control, and
- operational planning.

Police practice is largely structured around managing individual incidents. The concept of operational art allows for the beat cop to be integrated into a greater strategy by developing a mastery of individual and small team skills to launch successful operations dealing with conflict and violence. The initial responding units must act in a coordinated effort accomplishing the following objectives: 1) restrict the attackers’ ability to maneuver, 2) deny them an avenue of escape, 3) stop their deadly behavior, and 4) fend off a counter-attack. Operational coordination requires retention of resources to engage multiple attackers regionally, since the first 30 minutes of an attack are the most critical. In police operations, it is demonstrated in policy and doctrine within the ICS and NIMS procedures; however, these doctrines focus on logistics of an incident-specific nature and not on command concepts for future operations. Police leaders need to out think their enemies and begin to use the analytical tools supplied to them, which includes elimination of a purely tactical orientation.

Sergeant. Gomez credits the SWAT teams training in small units as one of the reasons for the successful capture of the second robber (personal communication, July 2, 2010). While the bank robbers had the advantage of the surprise attack and shock effect, operational planning and the rapid application of force neutralized the opponent.

The Columbine school shooting, the North Hollywood bank shooting, the Mumbai attacks and the Beslan massacre all demonstrated that the key to effective response to dynamic attacks is deftly and quickly neutralizing the momentum of the attackers. Failure to do so allows the attackers to achieve superiority. It is evident from the examination of these cases that the local response plans need to be altered to include training in operational art and the ability to build network capacities to handle an attack of this magnitude. This building may ultimately require the assistance of the military, which brings another dimension of law enforcement training to the forefront. While the type of threat demonstrated in these cases is not as deadly as others within the National Planning Scenarios, its lack of preparation may actually be what causes it to be the most appealing to the terrorist cell.

## **5. Develop Effective Communication Between Law Enforcement Agencies**

Communication is defined as a process by which we assign and convey meaning in an attempt to create a shared understanding. It is through communication that collaboration and cooperation occur. Effective communication is characterized to include timely information, free flow of information and establishment of communication systems and processes across organizations (Hocevar & Thomas, 2006, p. 10). Virtually every case study, literature review and interviewee stressed the topic of communication. Representatives from varying agencies need to be able to disseminate information to each other on a tactical and strategic level. Leaders must strive for continual information exchanges and feedback. The lack of clear communication impacts negatively on the efficiency and effectiveness on response actions.

Radio interoperability seems to be the first concern. Sergeant Gomez stated that the SWAT team does possess police radios that have the frequencies of larger police agencies in the area (personal communication, June 30, 2010). However an upgrade to include the smaller agencies does not appear to be in the works due to the fact that the system they have now is relatively new and an upgrade would cost money that is not readily available (S. Gomez, personal communication, June 30, 2010). Investigator



Battan spoke of how all the agencies in Colorado wanted to go to an 800 Mgz radio system before Columbine, but due to administrative powers and bureaucratic issues, a change of that magnitude accentuated a budget that was not available (K. Battan, personal communication, July 14, 2010). However, after Columbine, money was found because it was shown that communication with other agencies was ineffective at the time of Columbine (K. Battan, personal communication, July 14, 2010).

While almost all the literature stressed the importance of interoperability and the need to enhance the technology, communication incorporates so much more. As demonstrated in Mumbai and Beslan, reliable information flow is crucial to law enforcement's counter response. It is essential that law enforcement entities have a system in place that allows multiple agencies to exchange and analyze information, which would allow for planning and preparation. Communication between first responders is essential also. A common language in times of emergency is pivotal. Sergeant Gomez preached how the overhead helicopters and surrounding noises limited his ability to hear his police radio, therefore his non-verbal communication with other team members played a crucial role in the apprehension of the suspect and the safety of the rest of the police (personal communication, June 30, 2010). Gomez credits constant training as the cornerstone to the non-verbal ability.

By working with other organizations, we improve familiarity of radio protocols and hand signals. At a time where explaining is not an option, the coordinated efforts improve understanding through better communication.

### **C. SUMMARY**

The law enforcement profession is a continual learning experience because those that want to do harm to the world are forever finding new ways to accomplish their missions. The emergency response is expanding dramatically for local law enforcement to include broader homeland security responsibilities. The ability to look back on events that have garnered national attention allows researchers to help organizations develop a strategic response to what is yet to come.

## VII. RECOMMENDATIONS/CONCLUSION

*The Homeland galaxy is rich with capabilities but poor in cohesion—no one organization has the requisite authority or manpower to harness and employ all the potential.*

McConnell & Shelstad, 2008, p. 179

### A. INTRODUCTION

This thesis addressed the following research question: given the differences found across law enforcement agencies, what might be the most effective and efficient ways to enhance capacities? Subsidiary questions focused on identifying factors that inhibit and incentivize cooperation, along with development of best or smart practices. In order for the nation to improve response, the law enforcement community has to become a megacommunity. According to Mark Gerencser et al., “Megacommunities are not large communities of people; they are communities of organizations whose leaders and members have deliberately come together across national, organizational, and sectoral boundaries to reach goals they cannot achieve alone” (2008, p. 28).<sup>10</sup> While each incident examined in this thesis is different, solutions can be generalized. Agencies can benefit from considering the relationship of components instead of only considering individual incidents and lessons in isolation.

The context of the megacommunity is “solving problems by building everyone’s capabilities to think about those problems together” (Gerencser et al., 2008, p. 81). This idea of regional relationships was supported by those interviewed when they stated that instituting MOUs was easy due to their good working relationships with surrounding agencies. Because most of the law enforcement agencies in the United States are from populations below a 100,000, building strong and trusting relationships with other agencies and jurisdictions is essential to coordinate resources and communicate with each

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<sup>10</sup> It should be noted that Gerencser et al.’s (2008) megacommunities refers to bringing the three sectors of business, government, and civil society together to solve the world’s most complex problems. The term used within this thesis is in reference to building a law enforcement community network.

other. By merging capabilities, the benefits to all are sustained for a longer period of time (Gerencser et al., 2008, p. 86). When a crisis arises, it does not recognize jurisdictional boundaries, and therefore we must establish a system by which support for regional integration spans across these barriers. In order to prepare the law enforcement community for a unique crisis, smart practices from past events needs to be easily accessible, detailed and relevant so that corrective action can be instituted. If steps are taken to improve this process, funding to sustain corrective action, training and equipment may be easier to accrue.

## **B. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Only the realistic assessment of incidents brings forth a learning experience to facilitate prevention and response to future similar attacks. Within this thesis, themes have been identified from studying the past experiences. These themes are areas in which recommendations to improve response and strategy are imperative. The following recommendations are ways to amend the identified gaps and encourage development and implementation of effective solutions. The recommendations are presented to various levels of government, because it takes a nation working together to defeat terrorism.

### **1. Expand National Policies and Doctrines to Include Response by Law Enforcement to a Paramilitary Attack**

This recommendation is directed to the Department of Homeland Security. Currently, national policies and doctrines fail to address a quick and effective response to a paramilitary attack on U.S. soil. Instead, their focus is on prevention or post-attack measures. By expanding the focus of these policies and doctrines to include exercises and scenarios similar to Mumbai and Beslan, light will be shed on the training and preparation that is lacking at all levels of government. Specifically, the policy should address a tactical response resolution of an on-going situation or event in progress. The mission for engagement and defeat of an enemy is very different from prevention, investigation and consequence management—the three areas of focus currently seen in the policies and doctrines. The national polices and doctrines need to address strategic issues.

Lessons learned from the Mumbai attacks demonstrate that the terrorists are thinking strategically. The masterminds of the Mumbai terrorist attacks displayed sophisticated strategic thinking in their choice of targets and their efforts to achieve multiple objectives. They learned from the past events and instead of just planting bombs, they had gunmen attack the train station and they seized control of hotels where they set fires. The Mumbai attackers analyzed the security in place, devised new tactics, and did the unexpected. Terrorists and their methods change in form in order to find new ways to survive and better project the strengths of the terrorists against the weaknesses of opposing civilizations. Our national policies and directives need to change to address these weaknesses and build strength within all of our government responses.

## **2. Develop Smart Practices and Lessons Learned on Events That Occur and Distribute Them to All Law Enforcement Agencies**

This recommendation is to all levels of government. Proper critiques of paramilitary incidents and exercises, including after action reports, should be effectively disseminated to the Department of Homeland Security and back to all levels of law enforcement, from local to federal agencies. The attacks that occurred in Mumbai and Beslan demonstrated the need for improved counterterrorist coordination between national-level and local law enforcement agencies and for strengthened counterterrorist capabilities on the part of first responders. All the remaining lessons should be shared so that steps can be taken to prepare and strategize for such an event. The lessons learned and after action reports must be fully documented and devoid of blame. This is not usually done because of the threat of pending litigations. It is imperative that those who were involved in the incident express their first-hand knowledge. Without it, speculation will result and failures will continue. Education comes not only from success but also failures. Creating a national capability to identify and advocate lessons learned is an important role for the federal government.

## **3. Local Police Forces Must Train and Prepare for Small Unit Attacks**

This recommendation is intended for all local law enforcement agencies. Training *all* patrol personnel, the most critical and vulnerable front line of defense, to act

immediately to deploy safely and effectively in small teams is paramount. Since all response is local, the training must include more advanced weaponry, an operational strategic response and table-top and hands-on exercises. Continuity of training for this new skill set is vital and must be part of an agency's in-service by-annual refresher program. Local authorities must have appropriate response plans in place that include how to request for additional assistance, how to prioritize multiple incidents and how to streamline command and control. Local patrol officers will always be the first to respond, and if they are not adequately trained and led, they will be the first to die.

#### **4. Modernize Police Forces to Address the Increasing Threat of Terrorism Response, Particularly Multi-Shooter Response**

This recommendation is for the administrators of local law enforcement agencies. Prior to September 11, most local law enforcement agencies had very little or no experience with terrorism; however, since that tragic day local police agencies have become full partners in the vigorous fight against terrorism. While it is a welcome challenge for them, their contributions can only be made by modernizing their police agencies, which includes equipment and training. While some agencies are offering patrol rifles, it is still not a mandatory piece of equipment nor is departmental wide training in it. Terrorists and criminals are strategists and will continue to look at what methods bring forth success. As demonstrated in the North Hollywood incident, the suspects were wearing body armor that protected them against the handgun fire of the first responders. Since most body armor is not designed to stop rifle ammunition, a patrol rifle gives the responding officer a better tool to end an incident when body armor is worn by the assailant. Patrol rifles equip officers with another tool to solve problems they are unable to handle with a handgun or shotgun.

#### **5. Create Multi-Jurisdictional Interoperability Standards**

This recommendation focuses on local law enforcement agencies but also incorporates state, federal and even military agencies. First responders must conform with surrounding jurisdictions in tactics, techniques and procedures in how to assemble and handle effectively a terrorist cell active shooter scenario. Conflicts over

responsibility and capacity among the responding agencies is an expected conflict that could be resolved if frequent joint and interagency tactical response exercises are implemented. Coordination of these actions prior to a real event allows for less confusion during an otherwise stressful situation.

**6. Incorporate the Military in Training Exercises in Case Their Assistance Is Needed**

This recommendation is directed to the lawmakers. Depending on the magnitude of the attack and the weapons and equipment used, law enforcement agencies may not be capable of handling such an attack on U.S. soil. For the countries in which these attacks occurred, the military was permitted and expected to operate within their borders. Protocols for military assistance need to be re-examined in order for the U.S. military to provide a substantive and timely response. Specifically, alteration to the 1878 Posse Comitatus Act that would incorporate a terrorism exception should be considered.

**C. CONCLUSION**

The threat of an international terrorist attack against our country should not be taken lightly by law enforcement. The immediate deployment of police officers to a terrorist attack as first responders is inevitable. The training and tactics that they receive will dictate their ability to resolve, contain or mitigate the attack. What has been demonstrated throughout history is that engagement in an active shooter incident requires resources and an immediate response. SWAT teams are limited in size and speed with which they could respond to an incident in progress. Sharing resources and training with neighboring jurisdictions is a necessity. Development of necessary training will be affected by budget concerns, interagency cooperation and an overall acceptance that the training is essential. Even though the incidents at Mumbai and Beslan occurred in foreign countries, it is essential to prepare for these events at home. Awareness that this type of incident has occurred should be motivation enough to prepare so as not to be vulnerable. If we continue to fail to train, educate and prepare our local law enforcement

agencies, we are setting ourselves up for catastrophe. Preparation is not paranoia. The concept is so simple that it is even the motto—“be prepared”—to the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts of America

Development of an interdisciplinary response is the essential first step that is typically reflected in written plans and agreements, reinforced through regular meetings and practiced during exercises and actual emergencies. Continuity of training for this perishable skill must be part of an agency’s in-service refresher program. Defending against a terrorist attack requires bridging the gap between all police agencies and fighting to preserve the rights of this great nation.

Just like every situation is different, so is response of law enforcement. What this thesis strives to accomplish is institute a tactical and strategic thought process that will allow law enforcement to counter the unpredictable events that occur. Standardization of training will help ensure that all law enforcement agencies receive a foundation of active shooter training, will react in a similar manner and will enhance the ability to work as a team. The strategy allows for an educated development of coordination, collaboration and command; therefore three less issues to worry about as the emergency personnel on scene of a critical event.

## **APPENDIX A. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. What is the name of the jurisdiction to which you are assigned?
2. What agency/branch inside that jurisdiction are you assigned to?
3. What is your job title?
4. What is the size of your agency (number of sworn police officers)?
5. Are you involved in developing the policies / strategies within your department?
6. If yes, what is your role in policy/strategy development?
7. What is the population of your jurisdiction?
8. Have you or your department ever been involved in an “active shooter” situation?
9. If yes, can you describe the incident and what was your role? What did you observe? What was your department’s role and what did your department observe? What lessons did you learn?
10. Did your department have an active shooter policy before the event? If yes, describe it.
11. What were the lessons learned and documented by the department after the active shooter event? The jurisdiction?
12. Have the lessons learned influenced subsequent policy/strategy development? If so, how?
13. Has your department altered/changed the active shooter policy to incorporate multiple shooters/multiple locations?
14. If yes, what are the changes?
15. Have you ever had a drill exercise to test the active shooter policy?
16. What strategy does your department have in place to augment capacities if your resources are exhausted in responding to an active shooter scenario? (e.g., mutual aid agreements)
17. Has your “street cop” been trained to use heavy weapons (e.g., AK-47)?
18. Does your department have a tactical response team (SWAT)?
19. Is your department involved with other departments in utilizing resources for a rapid deployment team?
20. Does your department train with surrounding jurisdictions to deal with active shooter scenarios? If yes, how do you train?



21. What steps does your department take to build networking / capacities with surrounding jurisdictions?
22. Do you have any “best practices” that other departments may benefit from?
23. Is there anything else that you would like to add to this discussion that I have not asked?
24. Who else should I talk to?

## APPENDIX B. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question Asked	Response	Conclusions
<b>Are you involved in developing policies / strategies?</b>	2 – Yes (1 from each dept.) 2 – No	Those that are doing policy development do so on a minor scale.
<b>Have you/dept. ever been involved in an “active shooter” situation?</b>	All 4 answered “Yes” Columbine school shooting and North Hollywood bank	All were chosen based on the fact that they were involved in a national active shooter event.
<b>Did you have an “active shooter” policy prior to your event?</b>	All 4 answered “No”	Active Shooter came about due to the Columbine incident.
<b>What were the lessons learned from your event?</b>	Specifically they are too vast to list and are stressed in various reports. Important themes voiced were: weapons, response, communication including equipment, and multi-jurisdictional training.	While reports covered the full event, the officers interviewed stressed ones that are continues themes. Yes there are changes but these changes need to continually adapt. One time changes are not enough.
<b>Have lessons learned influenced subsequent policy change?</b>	All 4 answered “Yes”. Policy changes in training, response, and equipment were produced within their own jurisdictions.	Change is brought about by events. Requests prior to the event were ignored. A lack of change by administrators after an event lends to litigations.
<b>Has your dept. altered / changed policy to include multiple suspects and locations?</b>	2 – Yes 2 – No: changed procedures to address all critical incidents but nothing specific to active shooter	LAPD being a large metropolitan area believes they are more prone to attack and train for all threats learned.
<b>Do you have drill exercises to test active shooter policies/procedures?</b>	All 4 answered “Yes” and indicated during annual training.	Drill exercises are within own resources. Multiple agency drills are conducted every 3-5 years.
<b>What strategy does your dept. have in place to augment capacities during an active shooter event?</b>	All 4 answered Mutual Aid Agreements and Memorandums of Understandings	All stated formalized agreements lends to a system in place with defined roles. Informal agreements are brought about from prior working relationships.
<b>Has your “street cop” been trained with heavy weapons (i.e. rifles)?</b>	All 4 answered that the street officer has the option to receive training in patrol rifles if they choose but it is not mandatory.	The responsibility shifts to the individual officer by making it optional.
<b>Is your dept. involved with others in utilizing resources for rapid deployment teams?</b>	All 4 answered “Yes”. The LAPD officers stressed that they are used more and don’t really use others. Jefferson County officers stated it worked both ways.	Interviews were consistent with literature that smaller agencies must rely on other agencies to augment capacities. Larger depts. feel better equipped because handle more large scale events.
<b>Does your dept. train with surrounding jurisdictions to deal with active shooter scenarios?</b>	All 4 said that their SWAT teams do but nobody else.	All depts. still believe that this is a SWAT issue and involves their specialized training to overcome the situation.
<b>What steps does your dept. take to build network / capacities with surrounding jurisdictions?</b>	Sherriff / Chief meetings to address growing trends and developing regional concepts.	It is a topic of discussion but implementation of ideas by the Chiefs has been less frequent. Networks are built by those officers on the line that call to others for help during routine events.

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