

ACTIVE SHOOTER EXECUTIVE LAW ENFORCEMENT CONFERENCE

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“The most effective weapon against crime is cooperation...the efforts of all law enforcement agencies with the support and understanding of the American people.”

- J. Edgar Hoover



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The slide features a header with the conference name and a circular logo. Below the header, the word 'UNCLASSIFIED' is centered. The main content is a quote by J. Edgar Hoover in italics, followed by his name in bold. A photograph of the Statue of Liberty against an American flag is centered below the text. A small watermark 'Gary Blakey@shutterstock.com' is visible on the photo. The word 'UNCLASSIFIED' appears again at the bottom of the slide.

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Interpersonal Violence:

One human being using violence to kill or attempt to kill or physically injure another human being.

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Interpersonal Violence

Is the one universally shared phobia of all people.

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Pain is bad!

Do not share pain!

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When we see a scarred or disfigured human body we instinctively turn away.

We do not want to see our own vulnerability!

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Introduction:

Victim Specialist Kelly Bradford
Federal Bureau of Investigation

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We can withstand almost any
“WHAT”
If we have a “WHY” ...

Victor Frankl – “Mans Search for Meaning”

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FOUR CORNERS MANHUNT
1998

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Charles Bradford

Work Place Violence

Stabbing Incident

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RUN, HIDE, FIGHT

Surviving an Active Shooter
Event... Ready Houston

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Mass Casualty Incidents: Managing the response to victims and families

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Agenda

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- Predictable challenges and practical solutions
- Investigative and operational benefits
- Victim/family management
- Federal resources and capabilities
- Discuss responder impact

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Objectives

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- Prepare those who respond to meet victim/family needs
- Promote a victim assistance response that is coordinated and synchronized
- Provide resources to assist in the planning and execution of victim/family management

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What Defines a Successful Response?

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“Preserve the dignity of the deceased, while meeting the rights and needs of the living, and the requirements of governmental investigations.”

- Robert A. Jensen
Mass Fatality and Casualty Incidents: A Field Guide

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Elements of a Successful Response

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- Right people
- Right plan
- Right focus



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Investigative/Operational Benefits

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- Demonstrates agency commitment to victims/families
- Establishes trust and enhances cooperation from victims and public
- Assists with identifying, locating, communicating with additional victims/witnesses
- Ensures a continuous flow of information to and from victims

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Predictability

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- Predictable needs and challenges in managing victim/family response can be effectively addressed with pre-planning and coordination
- Lead law enforcement agency has a key role to play



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Identification of Victims

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- Multiple categories of victims to identify
- Closed vs. open victim populations
- Managing expectations of families while ensuring accurate forensic identification
- Delivering death notification

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Practical Solutions

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- Designate LE POC to identify, develop victim list
- Assign victim's advocate to each family
- Assist with ante-mortem info collection
- "Provisional" notification and updates
- Use model protocol for death notification
- Designate Public Information Officer for each family if possible

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Management of Victim/Family Response

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- Convergence of families on scene
- Support for families of missing/deceased
- Support for hospitalized victims
- Children and special needs individuals
- Security and privacy, social media
- Personal effects management

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Practical Solutions

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- Victim/family assistance management team to include lead LE agency
- Direct victims/families to nearby reception site for assistance and information sharing
- Provide logistical support for remote family members
- Provide support for hospitalized victims
- Transition plan for post-incident support

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Communication

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- Massive number of inbound calls from families , friends and public
- Victims' primary need for information:
 - From an official source
 - As soon as it becomes available
 - Before the media receives it
- Interagency communication

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Practical Solutions

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- Establish a primary call number
- United Way (211) system?
- Ensure Command Post coordinates and communicates with lead victim assistance agency
- Integrated communication plan to push info to incident responders and victim families

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Practical Solutions (continued)

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- Coordinated status briefings with families in a secure, private setting
- Use Law Enforcement Online (LEO) Virtual Command Center or other methods for internal and external communication of victim/family issues

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Resource Coordination

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- Victim/family assistance is resource intensive
- Spontaneous volunteers, helpers, donations
- Victim/family needs for support and information will evolve and change

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Office for Victim Assistance Resources/Capabilities

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- Assistance with planning
- Fatality management consultation
- Financial resources
- Deployment of victim assistance resources



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Office for Victim Assistance Assets

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Available OVA assets to support response:

- Field Office Victim Specialists
- Victim Assistance Rapid Deployment Team (VARDT)
- Office for Victim Assistance HQ Team

Lead agency can request OVA support through:

- FBI Special Agent in Charge
- FBI OVA Director

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Department of Justice Resources

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Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) administers Federal crime victims funds for:

- Post-incident grants to agencies for victim assistance
- Standby call center
- Training and technical assistance for victim services providers

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Impact on Responders and Service Providers

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- Responders and service providers can be impacted
- Usually worse when children are victims
- Training may not fully prepare responders
- Trauma response is not a character flaw or sign of mental weakness

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Responder Impact

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- Trauma may cause severe psychological injury
- Often functional delay in symptoms until the response is over
- Lessons for law enforcement from the military experience in Iraq/Afghanistan

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Responder Impact (continued)

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- For many responders, the major barrier to effective recovery is:
 - Stigma associated with mental health services
 - Perceived effect on careers
- These only change when psychological injury is treated the same as physical injury and seeking help is normalized and valued by the agency

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During the Event

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- Monitoring and support for responders during the event
- “Walk-around” services
- Support and re-enforce self-care

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Role of Responders with Victims

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- Define roles and parameters of responders/providers
- Avoid assigning officers to support families if they were involved in the crime scene, including the handling of remains and personal effects

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Recovery

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- Trauma may have a permanent impact on health and performance
- Time away from the job is key to recovery

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Resources for Support

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- Employee assistance and chaplain programs
- Debriefing after an incident is crucial!
- Private or university based trauma centers
- In some states – first responders may be eligible for crime victim services and financial assistance

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Handouts and Resources

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- Crisis Communication with Victims and Families for Senior Executives
- Pre-incident, Incident Checklist
- DOJ Brochure – Terrorism and Mass Violence Victim Assistance Grants

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Death Notification Training
“We Regret to Inform You”

FBI / Penn State online training

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Handouts and Resources (continued)

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- Mass Fatality Incident Response handbook
- Medical Examiners and Coroners: Best Practices for Communication with Next of Kin - Found at www.swgmdi.org

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Contact Information

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QUESTIONS?

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