



Active Shooter Study: Quick Reference Guide

In 2014 the Federal Bureau of Investigation initiated a study of active shooter incidents to provide federal, state, local, campus and tribal law enforcement with accurate data to better understand how to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from these incidents.

Snapshot

An active shooter is an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a populated area.

The FBI identified 160 active shooter incidents between 2000 and 2013. Among the study results:

- An average of 11.4 incidents occurred annually with an increasing trend from 2000 to 2013.
- An average of 6.4 occurred in the first 7 years studied and an average of 16.4 occurred in the last 7 years.
- Incidents occurred in 40 of 50 states and the District of Columbia.
- 70% of the incidents occurred in a commerce (73, 46%), or education (39, 24%) environment.
- 60% of the incidents ended before police arrived.
- In 63 incidents where the duration of incident could be ascertained, 44 (69%) ended in 5 minutes or less, with 23 ending in 2 minutes or less.
- 64 (40%) incidents fell within the parameters of the federal definition of “mass killing” (3 or more killed).

Shooters

- All but 2 incidents involved a single shooter.
- In at least 9 incidents, the shooter first shot and killed a family member(s) in a residence before moving to a more public location to continue shooting.
- The shooter committed suicide in 64 (40%) incidents. 37 before police arrived, 17 after police arrived, and 10 at another location.
- 6 shooters were female, the rest male.
- At least 5 shooters from 4 incidents remained at large as of September 2014.
- In businesses closed to pedestrian traffic, 22 of the 23 shooters were current/former employees.

Casualties

- 486 people were killed in the 160 incidents and 557 were wounded.
- In at least 15 (9.4%) incidents, family members were targeted resulting in 20 killed and 1 wounded.
- In 16 (10%) incidents, current, former, or estranged wives as well as current or former girlfriends were targeted resulting in 12 killed, 3 wounded and 1 unharmed. In addition 42 others were killed and 28 wounded.

Resolutions

- 90 (56.3%) incidents ended on the shooter’s initiative, by the shooter committing suicide, fleeing, or stopping shooting.
- 21 (13.1%) incidents ended after unarmed citizens successfully restrained the shooter (Off-duty officers assisted in 2). In 5 of those incidents, the shooting ended after armed, non-law enforcement officers exchanged fire with the shooter.
- In 45 (28.1%) incidents, law enforcement engaged in gunfire to end the threat. In 21 of those 45 incidents (46.7%), 9 officers were killed and 28 were wounded.

Locations

- The FBI study divided incidents into 11 distinct location categories with most incidents occurring in commercial and educational areas.
 - Commerce: 73 (46%)
 - Businesses Open to Pedestrian Traffic: 44 (27.5%)
 - Businesses Closed to Pedestrian Traffic: 23 (14.3%)
 - Malls: 6 (3.8%)
 - Education: 39 (24%)
 - Schools (Pre-K to 12): 27 (16.9%)
 - Institutions of Higher Education (IHE): 12 (7.5%)
 - Government: 16 (10%)
 - Other Government Property: 11 (6.9%)
 - Military: 5 (3.1%)
 - Open Space: 15 (9.4%)
 - Residential: 7 (4.4%)
 - Houses of Worship: 6 (3.8%)
 - Health Care: 4 (2.5%)
- At least 25 (15.6%) incidents took place at more than one location.

Education Environment

- IHEs
 - 2 of 12 shooters were female; 5 were former students, 4 current students, 2 employees, and 1 patient at a medical center.
 - 5 of 12 incidents occurred on a Friday
- Pre-Kindergarten to 12th Grade
 - 17 of 20 high school and middle school shooters were students at the affected school.
 - The majority of school shooters were students (12 of 14 high school and 5 of 6 middle school/junior high).
 - 9 of the 27 school incidents occurred on a Monday.
 - 11 incidents ended when unarmed school employees and students successfully confronted shooters to end the threat.
 - At least 14 school employees were killed and 16 wounded.