

PRIMA Newsletter August 2015

Active Shooter

By James Cicala

By now, you are all well versed with the events of July 23rd here in Lafayette, Louisiana. For me, being a former Lafayette Police Officer and Commissioner with the Lafayette Parish Advisory Commission on Crime Prevention, this tragedy hit way too close to home. Active Shooter Response is something that we have been hearing and learning about for some time. All of us have safety programs that address this type of Emergency Response. But, I can tell you personally that I never thought it could happen here in Lafayette, Louisiana. One of the lowest unemployment rates in the state. Voted nationally as the one of the “Happiest” places. One of the nations’ “Tastiest” places with a great university and people to match. How could this happen here?

Well the answer is simple, it can and will happen anywhere! Our nation has changed so much in the past two decades, and we have to keep pace with these changes. No longer can we have an Emergency Response Plan “In Name Only”. We need to revisit our plans, policies and procedures. We need to incorporate the most current training and information to ensure our plans are not only current and active, but reflect the best practices not available.

Two weeks before that Grand Theater shooting, I had a meeting on my campus with all the parish, city and state law enforcement and first responder agencies, to discuss and update our training to deal with an Active Shooter Response. At that time, I was advised that the Governors’ Office of Homeland Security had several training programs online and seminars available to enhance our understanding and preparation for many emergency responses. One of the programs offered by FEMA and GOHSEP was MGT 324 on Campus Emergency Prevention Response and Recovery. The class was set for the first week of August, eleven days after the shooting here in Lafayette. These two days could do nothing to mitigate the events of July 23rd, but did enlighten me to the newest protocols and best methods in perpetration and response to this type of incident on a college campus. The state and federal governments offer many of these training and informational resources and can be found at <http://gohsep.la.gov/trainingchoose.aspx> Take the time to see if this site can offer you a valuable resource in your planning, training and policy building for your agency or department.