

# Orange Beach is not Prepared for an Active Shooter

800 words

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## **Orange Beach is not Prepared for an Active Shooter**

Orange Beach is not prepared for an active shooter, having dedicated minimal resources to this possibility. Granted the odds are long that a lone shooter takes aim from high on the Beach Road, but when your bread is buttered by keeping tourist families safe in their vacation rentals, doubling down on being frugal may not be the best roll of the dice.

An A.S.H.E.R. Event (Active Shooter/Hostile Event Response) is an incident where an individual (shooter or bomber) is looking for a high body count. Orange Beach needs a stellar plan that is rehearsed several times each year across multiple agencies (City, County, State and Federal), requiring First Responders to go into battlefield mode, perfecting a proven strategy.

Residents should be able to download the City's Comprehensive Preparedness Guide from the web site, outlining the city's plan for constituent families. Telling them to always be aware of their surroundings, protecting themselves, and using concealment from the enemy.

Let's start with the one basic problem. How many casualties can our ambulances carry simultaneously to the hospital in Foley? Two at a time, according to sources at the Fire Department.

In a mass-casualty event we need more capacity. This does not mean more ambulances, simply having a plan where we have enough blankets, litters, tourniquets, chest seal bandages and minimal equipment for transporting victims in designated city trucks (12) is needed. Training drivers where the resources are, and who will be responsible for handing them out, collecting the resources when returned, and getting the equipment serviced for post-event storage.

Communication is critical. We must migrate Fire Dispatch to Orange Beach, consolidating our command infrastructure. Both departments must be on the same page. For example, a call to Robertsdale 911 may send First Responders to Sea Breeze when the actual incident is at Sea Chase. Robertsdale cannot know the area as well as our local dispatch.

The successful response to an active-shooter scenario hangs on effective communication, keeping all agencies on the same frequency, said Roy Glover ([rglover@alabamafirecollege.org](mailto:rglover@alabamafirecollege.org)), Program Manager of the Alabama Fire College, and Instructor for the Active Shooter/Hostile Event Response (A.S.H.E.R.) course.

The key issue is funding, ensuring significant resources are allocated each year, allowing Fire and Police to train together, paying them overtime wages if necessary. In a devastating event like a car bomb at Mullet Toss, training with Gulf Shores, Foley, the

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County and the State will make the command structure for a mass-casualty event very clear, because Orange Beach has trained with these agencies, familiarizing them with our frequencies, gaining their confidence in our ability to lead.

Inter-Agency Training provides procedural and communications standardization across the affected area with representation from PD, FD, FEMA, DOJ, DOD, and FBI.

I strongly argue for spending the money, ensuring Orange Beach has a clear command structure, respected by other agencies.

Elected Officials on the City Council will argue against spending the money, but this is always the case with resource allocation. Council Members are only doing their jobs, getting paid to be good stewards of the city's finances. They may not imagine what could be, reasoning more like counter-punchers, responding to events as they happen on the ground.

In a mass-casualty scenario you really cannot afford to go spreadsheet frugal on training and communications, because these monies are well spent, definitely saving lives in an active-shooter situation or car-bombing tragedy (Oklahoma City).

Remember, the whole world will be watching, and Orange Beach's brand will either rise or fall on how well managed a mass-casualty event is perceived by the news media.

Training, training, training is the process Nick Saban uses to great effect. Taking a page out of his book rolls off the tongue, but is difficult to emulate. Getting started, we must budget for a well-funded training-communication package for Active Shooter/Hostile Event Response (A.S.H.E.R.) teams across myriad agencies (\$1Million).

These same command concepts also apply to hurricanes, because sooner or later Orange Beach will headline Fox News.

Please watch this shortened documentary: Active Shooter, Managing the Mass-Casualty Threat

[https://velvetillusion.com/2015\\_vi/video/2019/active\\_shooter/active\\_shooter.mp4](https://velvetillusion.com/2015_vi/video/2019/active_shooter/active_shooter.mp4)).

ENDS.

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