

Workplace Violence & Active Shooter Prevention

Overview

MORE THAN 2 MILLION AMERICANS REPORT BEING VICTIMS of workplace violence every year. In 2016, more than 16,000 incidents of ‘intentional injury by another person in the workplace’ were reported. Workplace violence is defined by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) as “actions or words that endanger or harm another employee or result in other employees having a reasonable belief that they are in danger.”

According to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), homicide is the fourth most common cause of fatal occupational injuries in the U.S. Between 2006 and 2010, 11 percent of all workplace fatalities were work-related homicides. Since 2010, workplace violence has continued to increase. In 2014, there were 4,679 fatal workplace injuries, 403 of which were homicides. The most recent data published by the BLS states that 500 Americans were victims of workplace homicides in 2016.

The United States Department of Homeland Security defines an active shooter as “an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area; in most cases, active shooters use firearms, and there is no pattern or method to their selection of victims.” According to a 2018 report from the BLS, workplace shootings went up by 83 cases to 394 total from 2015 to 2016, and they comprised 79 percent of all workplace homicides in 2016.

The challenges

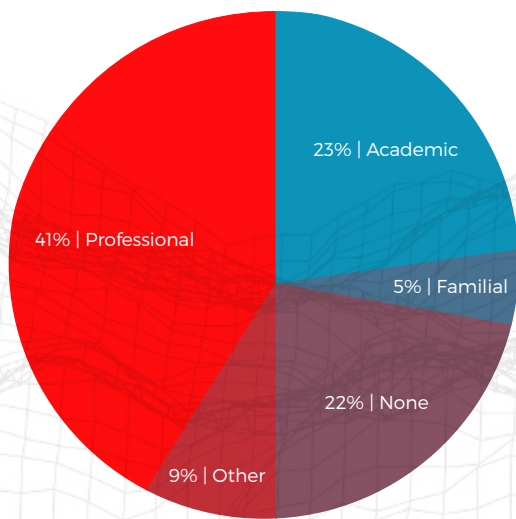
NO CONSISTENT PROFILE

One challenge facing security professionals charged with preventing workplace violence and active shooters is the seemingly random perpetrator profile. The only semi-consistent characteristic of active shooters is gender. According to an FBI report that reviewed active shooter incidents since 2000, 154 out of 160 were perpetrated by a male. Another common characteristic is that, according to studies, 67 percent of adults and 58 percent of adolescents indicated their desire to commit violent attacks beforehand.

However, active shooters do not have statistically significant similarities in factors such as motive, relationship to victims or socio-economic background. A sampling of recent incidents includes perpetrators that were disgruntled employees, angry customers, mentally unstable individuals, family members of the victims and terrorists. For example:

INCIDENT LOCATION	PERPETRATOR PROFILE
UPS Warehouse <i>San Francisco</i>	Disgruntled former employee
Pulse Nightclub <i>Orlando, FL</i>	Former security guard
North Park Elementary School <i>San Bernardino, CA</i>	Estranged husband of an employee
Stoneman Douglas High School <i>Parkland, FL</i>	Former Student
Inland Regional Center <i>San Bernardino, CA</i>	Terrorist
First Baptist Church <i>Sutherland Spring, TX</i>	Son-in-law of church attendee

As this chart further highlights, the relationship of the perpetrators to the victims is unpredictable:



Active Shooter Relationship To Victims: FBI Data

LOCATIONS AND SCENARIOS VARY

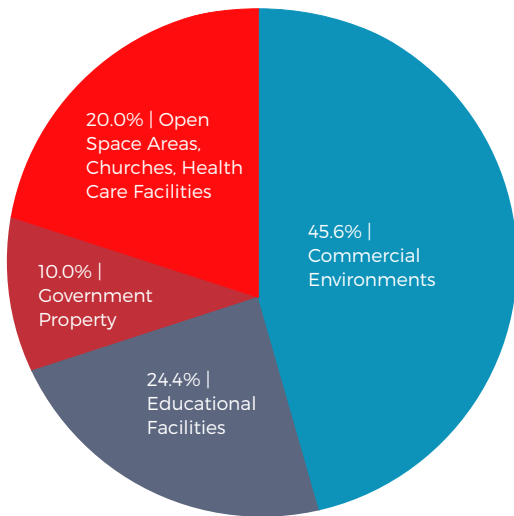
The largest percentage of active shooter incidents annually in the U.S. occur at the workplace, with academic institutions being the second most common location. The map below indicates that incidents happen more often in dense population centers. However, incidents have occurred in nearly every region in the country.



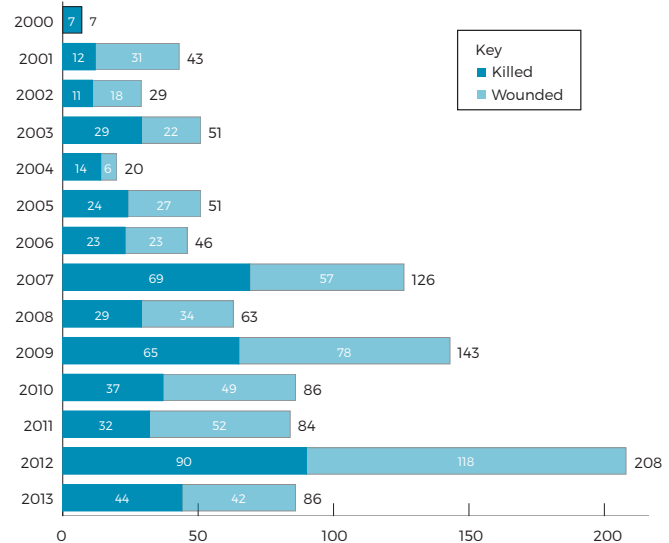
Locations of Active Shooter Incidents through 2011; FBI Data

Predicting what type of workplace environment is more likely to incur a violent situation is also a challenge. As seen in the graphic below, over 45 percent of reported active shooter incidents take place in commercial environments. Over 31 percent of active shooter incidents occurred in retail shops, malls and other businesses open to pedestrian traffic. Businesses that are closed to public traffic comprise only 14.4 percent, while primary schools (K-12) make up 16.9 percent of active shooter incidents.

Contrastingly, institutions of higher learning comprising just 7.5 percent of incidents. Areas such as churches/houses of worship, residences and other open spaces are not frequently considered when discussing workplace violence and active shooters; however, they make up 18.6 percent of locations impacted by active shooters since 2000.



Active Shooter Incident Locations: FBI Data



Major Active Shooter Incident Wounded and Killed 2000 - 2013; FBI Data

Individuals employed in a retail, law enforcement or healthcare role are the most likely to be the victims of workplace violence. Other high-risk industries include public service workers, utility workers, customer service agents, delivery drivers, taxi drivers and bank tellers.

Healthcare facilities witness more violent incidents than any other industry. In 2013, 27 out of the 100 fatalities in healthcare and social services settings were due to workplace violence. In addition to fatalities, workplace violence is also a significant contributor to injuries on the job. Between 2011 and 2013 there was an average of 24,550 workplace assaults, 72 percent of which took place in the healthcare and social services industries. According to the United States Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the victims of workplace assaults are 70 percent female, and 21 percent of the assaults required 31 or more days away from work to recover.

INCREASE IN INCIDENTS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITY

According to an FBI study, active shooter incidents have increased every year since 2000 with an average increase of 11.4 incidents a year. Nearly half of the time, the situations are ended by law enforcement

personnel engagement, and in 40 percent of the incidents, the shooters commit suicide. How long the shooter is active for is influenced by the law enforcement response time, which can vary drastically based on the location and the ease of access to the facility. Less than one percent of the time, the shooter surrenders peacefully.

According to The United States Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA), the following factors increase the risk of workplace violence incidents:

- » Exchanging money with the public
- » Working with people with mental health issues
- » Working alone or in isolated areas
- » Providing public services or care to the public
- » Working where alcohol is served
- » Working at night
- » Working in high crime areas

To combat workplace violence, OSHA recommends organizations "have a well-written and implemented workplace violence prevention program, combined with engineering controls, administrative controls, and training can reduce the incidence of workplace violence in both the private sector and federal workplaces."

Analysis and Recommendations

Workplace violence and active shooter scenarios, while more prevalent in higher density urban populations centers and commercial environments, can happen anywhere and at any time. This dynamic rise in incidents of violence makes it necessary for business and community leaders to put proactive measures in place that decrease the likelihood of an incident from occurring and reduces the impact if it does. This should be done through a holistic approach that includes:

(1) PROACTIVE MEASURES—addressing an organization’s culture and governance (e.g., policies, procedures, roles and responsibilities, Employee Assistance Program), intelligence (open source and proprietary source supported by artificial intelligence), risk and security assessments (e.g., crime prevention through Environmental Design, CCTV cameras and analytics, armed or unarmed guards), emergency response plans and crisis planning and communications.

- (2) PROACTIVE AND REACTIVE MEASURES—covering Threat Assessment Management (e.g., establishing a team of internal and external stakeholders), understanding a psychological profile, generating awareness about a survival mindset and courses of action.
- (3) REACTIVE MEASURES—including security response with an established plan, responding to law enforcement, immediate next steps and aftermath.

A holistic approach considers every facet of an organization’s risk profile and is used to inform where vulnerabilities exist and the business impact of a potential incident to determine where and how to deploy risk mitigation strategies for incident prevention.

Workplace Violence and Active Shooter Statistics

Workplace violence in the healthcare industry accounts for nearly as many serious violent injuries as all other industries combined.

(US DEPARTMENT OF LABOR 2018)

While the United States has about 5 percent of the world’s population, it accounts for 31 percent of all public mass shootings.

(CNN 2017)

Over the last five years, active shooter incidents have occurred across all geographic regions with no identifiable patterns.

(FBI 2017)

Total active shooter incidents for 2016 were higher than each of the previous five years.

(FBI 2017)

Workplace violence cost an estimated \$121 billion per year. Losses include lost productivity, counseling, contract and sales, restoring, increased insurance costs, lawsuits and settlements.

(OSHA)

Reacting to a serious incident of workplace violence is 100 times more expensive than taking proactive measures for prevention.

(U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR PREVENTION OF WORKPLACE VIOLENCE, INC.)

FOR MORE INFORMATION about how Pinkerton can help your organization mitigate acts of workplace violence, call us today at **1.800.724.1616** or visit us at **pinkerton.com**.