



Protocol on Response to an Active Shooter at Lakehead University (Thunder Bay Campus)

Category: Emergencies;

Jurisdiction: Human Resources;

Approval Authority: Executive Team;

Established on: March 2009;

Amendments: February 13, 2018;

Reviews: January 2018.

Preamble

Following is Lakehead University's comprehensive protocol for the University's and Thunder Bay Police and Emergency Services' response to any incident involving weapon violence, whether threatened or actual, on the Thunder Bay campus. The protocol could also be used in, or adapted for, responses to other forms of violent behaviour or environmental or animal threats or utilities failures dangerous enough to require a lockdown of the campus.

This protocol has been developed in consultation with a working group made up of administrative, academic, student, and Police representatives, and with reference to the University's Emergency/Crisis Response Policy and the draft "Mass Notification Procedure" produced by the Human Resources Office. Reference has also been made to practices and policies at other universities and institutions, and to studies and recommendations concerning the tragedies at Dawson College and the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University ("Virginia Tech") and elsewhere. In March 2009 an initial draft of this protocol was vetted by Lakehead's Internal Relations Committee and a final version was produced on the basis of the

Committee's recommendations and requirements. Following a review of the protocol in January, 2018 other revisions were made.

I. Initial Report

1. Report is received by Lakehead University (LU) Security or Thunder Bay (TBay) Police re someone shooting gun on campus. The receiving party obtains as much information as possible concerning shooter(s) and location(s).
 - a. If the Security Office itself is attacked, the reporting and liaison responsibilities of LU Security shall be taken up by Physical Plant; if both LU Security and Physical Plant are attacked, Residence and Conference Services shall take their place.
 - b. The LU Security Director (or Physical Plant or Residence & Conference Services staff member) who receives the report either directly or via the TBay police becomes automatically the Security Communications Officer (SCO) for Police liaison.

II. Responses by University and Police

2. SCO triggers campus-wide alarm consisting of Blazecast messages and MobileSafety push notifications declaring lockdown with simple, clear instructions. – in case the Security Office itself is attacked. Lockdown, rather than evacuation, is necessary
 - a. to ensure maximum protection against gunshots;
 - b. to minimize the number of targets available to the shooter; and
 - c. to enable police to manoeuvre swiftly and unimpeded.
3. The lockdown shall entail the following:
 - a. Everyone on campus remains where they are when they hear shots fired or receive the alarm – provided that the area can offer some sort of shelter and security and that the shooter is not active there, or,
 - b. If they're not in a secure room, they immediately seek the nearest shelter, or,
 - c. If the shooter is active in the location where they find themselves, and immediate exit is not possible, they seek whatever shelter they can find behind local furniture, architectural, or landscape features;

- d. University employees identify and assist persons with disabilities by escorting them to, depending on the circumstances, the nearest exit or secure area, and help them to conform to all protective requirements in the secure area;
- e. Anyone who encounters responding police should keep hands elevated with palms open and visible, and should obey all police instructions;
- f. All doors into sheltering room should be, if possible, locked and/or barricaded, and whatever cover is available in the room should be sought;
- g. All lights should be turned off or only minimal lighting should be maintained;
- h. Curtains or blinds on windows should be closed;
- i. Everyone should remain out of sight of uncovered windows and doors with windows;
- j. Everyone should remain calm and assist others in remaining quiet and out of sight;
- k. Everyone should remain silent unless communication is absolutely necessary;
- l. In every room sheltering more than one person, one person should act as Lockdown Officer (LDO) to ensure that lockdown procedures are followed and to monitor communications from the University over whatever media are available;
 - (i) In administrative units LDOs will be Managers, Directors or Executives;
 - (ii) In each classroom the senior instructor shall automatically become the LDO;
 - (iii) Groups who find themselves initially without an LDO shall select their own on the spot;
- m. To avoid swamping the Security Office, Police, and Emergency Services communication systems, everyone should REFRAIN from contacting anyone outside the area of shelter UNLESS there is certainty that the shooter(s) is (are) present or nearby; in this case, if escape is not possible the LDO shall contact Security to alert them to the local danger;
- n. Everyone should remain in their secure room or area until police, the University's fire wardens, or, in the University's residences, the Residence Assistants (RAs), arrive to confirm that the emergency is over (see step 16 below).
- o. Attempts to rescue others who appear injured, threatened, or exposed should be made only if they will not endanger the persons inside a (relatively) secure area.

- p. Should a fire alarm go off in any building while the lockdown warning is in effect, then, unless there is an odour of smoke or other evidence of an actual fire, persons sheltering should disregard the alarm – but LDO's should identify primary, secondary and any other alternative means of escape such as windows in case an actual fire is detected.

4. Upon triggering the lockdown alert, the SCO immediately contacts TBay Police, or TBay Police, if they have received the initial report, immediately contact Security Office (or, if the Security Office cannot be reached, Physical Plant or Residence and Conference Services) – and the SCO – at which point the SCO shall trigger the alarm. If disconnected the TBay Police shall call the SCO back.

- a. SCO thereafter relays all communications to and from TBay Police who are now in charge of the response to the event (if regular telephone system breaks down, Security [or Physical Plant, or Residence & Conference Services] shall resort to radio phones).

5. SCO next designates another Security officer who is present to act as Communications Support Officer (2SCO). 2SCO shall handle all Security communications within the University (if 2SCO needs assistance, s/he shall co-opt any other Security officer who happens to be present).

6. Security determines location where Police and Security personnel can meet, which Police can easily reach and is within access, but out of harm's way, of site(s) where shooter(s) is (are) active. SCO identifies location to Police. This place shall be known as the "Command Centre" (CC).

7. TBay Police immediately send constables to site of reported shooting – with additional resources (e.g. tactical squad) to be supplied as needed.

- a. Police access floor plans of building(s) where shooting has been identified.

- b. Top priority of Police, to which all other actions must take second place, is to neutralize the shooter(s) at the first opportunity in order to remove the threat to life as soon as possible.
 - c. Police Supervisor proceeds to CC.
 - d. Designated Lakehead Security officer goes to CC with copies of building floor-plans and keys (electronic versions of the plans are publicly accessible – and thus readily available to the Police - at Physical Plant's web-site).
 - e. In the event that it appears that one or more hostages have been taken, the Police shall initiate their hostage incident procedures.
8. Police inform SCO about their plans to set up barricades at all points of access to campus – including foot and bicycle paths, and to block all access within campus to shooting site.
- a. If the Police request assistance, 2SCO contacts Lakehead Security officers on patrol, who shall, under Police guidance, help the Police to cordon off and keep people away from area where shooting is taking place. Lakehead Security officers must always make sure that they keep a safe distance between themselves and the reported location(s) of the shooter(s).
9. 2SCO also gathers information from Security officers to report to the SCO, who shall pass it on to the police.
- a. 2SCO initiates fan-out communications to summon to safe locations on campus all off-duty Security officers (including, if not already present, the Security Services Director).
10. If Police and SCO determine that they will need more assistance than Lakehead Security Officers alone can provide, the SCO shall instruct 2SCO to contact Physical Plant and provide them with Police contact information.
- a. Physical Plant contact immediately informs Plant officer in charge, who in turn attempts to contact the Director of Physical Plant or stand-in.
 - b. Plant officer in charge and/or delegates shall then either telephone the Police, or meet with them at the CC, to determine the nature and extent of the assistance required.

- c. Once Police instructions have been received, provided always that there is no danger to staff, Physical Plant officer in charge shall commence fan-out communications to Plant and other departments' staff about setting up barricades at specifically identified locations.
- d. If at any point the Police require further special assistance (e.g. involving electrical power, heating, or communications) or advice from University personnel, they shall request it directly (but with the assistance of the SCO if necessary) from the appropriate University department. If no one at the University can satisfy the request, the Police shall themselves contact sources of assistance outside the University.

11. Police establish their own Media Officer(s) for this incident and identify the Officer(s), with contact information, to the SCO. SCO then instructs 2SCO to pass this information on to Lakehead's Media Relations.

- a. The Media Relations office then informs the Chief of Staff & Director of Media Relations about the emergency and contacts the Police Media Officer(s).
- b. The Chief of Staff and Director of Media Relations or officer in charge of the Media Relations Office confers with the Police Media Officer(s) about a mass communication to the University community, both on and off campus, via other media (at this time the lockdown alert has already been triggered) – e.g. telephone paging, text messaging, plasma screen notices, Lakehead web site notices, and/or radios.
The communication should refer to the emergency and advise all – except members of the University's Emergency Operations Control Group - to stay away from campus – or, if they are already on campus, to stay where they are and join the lockdown. The mass communication should include a strong directive NOT to contact the University unless the sender has essential information to provide – otherwise the University's communications systems will be overwhelmed and incapacitated.
- c. Once the Media Relations Office and Police Media Officer(s) have agreed upon this communications plan, the Media Relations Office shall immediately execute it.

- d. The Police Media Officer(s) shall, in consultation with the Media Relations Office, issue communiqué to local media informing them of the danger and urging everyone to stay away from the University until further notice.
- e. Thereafter the Police Media Officer(s) and the LU Chief of Staff and Director of Media Relations, or his or her stand-in or delegate, shall co-ordinate all information about the incident to be communicated to a public audience, whether inside or outside the University.
- f. Police Media Officer(s) shall also inform other public emergency services about the situation.
- g. Security and the Office of Media Relations shall activate a communications filter to and from their offices to avoid being overwhelmed to the point of paralysis.

12. The SCO tries to contact the Vice-President (Administration and Finance) (VPAF) or the Provost & Vice-President (Academic), in that order, to signal that a Level 3 Emergency is occurring.

- a. The VPAF or Provost & Vice-President (Academic) then initiates fan-out communications to pass on the message to the President.
- b. VPAF, or stand-in, shall initiate fan out communications to put all other members of the University's Emergency Operations Control Group (EOCG) on alert.
- c. On the basis of information received from Security, the VPAF or stand-in shall determine whether it is necessary actually to activate the EOCG and the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) – which may have to be established, temporarily at least, off campus or by teleconference. If activation is deemed necessary the VPAF or stand-in shall initiate, again, the process of fan-out communications to connect all other members of the EOCG to the EOC.
- d. VPAF or EOCG shall appoint or activate University Emergency Liaison Officers (UELOs) to respond to next-of-kin of wounded and slain, and shall identify the UELOs to Chief of Staff & Director of Media Relations and the SCO. The SCO shall pass this information on to the Police.

III. End of Incident and Aftermath

13. Once Police are confident that all shooters have been neutralized, and that hostages have been released, they shall
- a. begin meticulous search for survivors and casualties, as well as other potential shooters;
 - b. administer aid to wounded – and call in other emergency service personnel to help with treatment and removal of wounded and slain;
14. When, in the view of the Police, it is no longer necessary to keep the campus cordoned off from public access, they shall inform SCO that emergency is over.
- a. SCO shall then issue an emergency over alert via Blazecast and MobileSafety and instruct the 2SCO to alert the rest of the Security Office, the Chief of Staff & Director of Media Relations or designate, and the VPAF.
15. Next the SCO shall initiate fan-out communications to authorize the University's fire wardens and RAs to proceed to all rooms and secure areas within their jurisdictions to advise everyone that the emergency is over and that they are free to leave. If they find any casualties they shall immediately call 911.
16. Police shall inform SCO that all barricades to campus access can be removed. SCO shall so inform 2SCO who shall alert other available Security personnel and Physical Plant.
17. The VPAF or stand-in shall inform (or confirm to) the President that the emergency has ended.
18. If the EOCG and EOC have been activated, they shall remain operative until the VPAF orders them to stand down.
19. Once contacted by the 2SCO the Chief of Staff & Director of Media Relations, in collaboration with the Police Media Officer(s), shall confirm termination of the lockdown to the

entire University community via available media, e.g., telephone paging, text messaging, plasma screen notices, Lakehead web site notices, email, and/or radios (see step (11)b above).

20. The Police Media Officer(s) shall alert the media and public emergency services that the emergency is over.

21. The Police Media Officer(s) shall set up any press conferences on the emergency and shall so inform the University's Chief of Staff & Director of Media Relations, who shall in turn inform the VPAF. University representatives (e.g. the President and Chief of Staff & Director of Media Relations) will be involved in the press conferences as the Police think best.

22. The Police shall alert next-of-kin of persons wounded or slain in the emergency, and pass on to them contact information about the UELOs.

- a. The Police shall pass on to the UELOs such information about the injuries to the victims as they think fit – and as shall be necessary for the UELOs to carry out their duties.
- b. The Media Relations Office shall identify the UELOs to the University community.
- c. The UELOs shall have the authority to gather such personal information from the University's records about the wounded and slain as shall be necessary for the UELOs to carry out their duties.
- d. The UELOs shall inform all University academic and administrative personnel who, in the performance of their duties, need to know who have been wounded or slain.

23. The Director of Security Services shall submit as soon as possible the Security Office's detailed and confidential incident reports on the emergency to the VPAF.

24. The Offices of Human Resources and Student Health and Counselling Services shall activate and coordinate plans for grief/trauma counselling, drawing on external community resources as necessary.

25. Since the area(s) where the shooting occurred will be off limits for some time – both for Police investigations and for Physical Plant inspection and repairs - alternative venues for the activities scheduled in the area(s) and alternative office space will have to be found through standard University room allocation procedures and communicated to the broader University community.

Glossary of Abbreviations:

SCO Security Communications Officer
LDO Lockdown Officer
RA Residence Assistant
2SCO Communications Support Officer
CC Command Centre
EOCG Emergency Operations Control Group
EOC Emergency Operations Centre
UELO University Emergency Liaison Officers

Review Period: When required;
Date for Next Review: To be determined;
Related Policies and Procedures: None;
Policy Superseded by this Policy: None

The University Secretariat manages the development of policies through an impartial, fair governance process. Please contact the University Secretariat for additional information on University policies and procedures and/or if you require this information in another format:

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