

# Tribal Leaders Building a Victim-Centered Response to Mass Violence

16<sup>th</sup> National Indian Nations Conference  
Justice for Victims of Crime

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Agua Caliente Reservation, California





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Marlys Big Eagle is the Victim Witness Coordinator for the United States Attorney's Office in the District of South Dakota, having established the US Attorney's Office Model Victim Witness Program, providing direct services to victims and witnesses in Indian country. Ms. Big Eagle has worked with victims of child abuse, domestic violence, sexual assault, fraud cases and worked with families who have lost a loved one to homicide. Ms. Big Eagle has assisted with multiple victim cases in Boston, MA and Charleston, SC. Ms. Big Eagle is Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Investigator for the Department of Justice and serves on the Executive Office of United States Attorney's (EOUSA's) Rapid Response Team and EOUSA's Mentor program. Ms. Big Eagle's previous work experience includes a position as the Executive Director of Missouri Shores Domestic Violence Center in Pierre, South Dakota, and as a Criminal Investigator on the Crow Creek Indian Reservation. Ms. Big Eagle received degrees from Northern State University and from South Dakota State University and started the Master's program at Oglala Lakota College in Rapid City, SD.

# 10 years FBI Victim Specialist



There are no experts-  
Only people who have tried to do their best  
and  
Are willing to share what they have learned.

***Gayle Thom, FBI Retired***

**Training & Technical Assistance CEO**

***(Chief Enthusiasm Officer)***

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Pick up a Business Card



# Why me?



- **Ground Zero**
- **Red Lake Nation School Shooting**
- **Hurricane Katrina**
- **Criminal Intelligence, Meth Enforcement**
- **Sturgis Motorcycle Rallies**
- **Mexican Border, Canada, Interpol**
- **10+ years in Tribal Communities**
- **SDHP Highway Patrol CAP** Crash Assistance Program
- **4 years Training & Technical Assistance**

*Nothing  
professionally  
compares to  
past years*

*Making a  
Difference*

*Nothing  
As  
Hard  
Either!*

## **Training Scenario: NINE MINUTES CHANGE A COMMUNITY FOREVER**

**A gunman's assault on his High School took only nine minutes from the time he drove up to the school to the time he ended his own life.**

**The young gunman had already killed his grandfather and his grandfather's companion before arriving at the school building where high school classes were in session. Within seconds, he shot the school security guard, killing him.**

**Less than two minutes after driving his grandfather's vehicle to the school building, the gunman entered the classroom where he killed a teacher and five students.**

**He was in that classroom for approximately one and a half minutes. From there, for approximately five minutes, the gunman wandered the school, where he took some random shots into classrooms as well as shooting other students, some of whose injuries were critical but not fatal.**

**It was at this time the gunman encountered police who had entered the building. He was then engaged in an exchange of gunfire with responding police officers. During the exchange, the officers were not struck. The gunman was struck three times and then took his own life. In all, about 45 shots were fired inside the school.**

# NINE MINUTES CHANGE A COMMUNITY FOREVER

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- 1. Is your community prepared to respond?***
- 2. What steps need to be taken in order to be prepared in advance and have a plan for an effective victim-centered community response to this traumatic tragedy?***



# As a leader, did you consider?

- Reunification
- Crisis Counseling
- Family Assistance Center
- Recovery of Bodies/  
Personal Effects
- ID/Death notifications
- Donations/Volunteers
- Media location away from scene and from families
- Extended Mental Health
- Assistance w/medical, funeral bills
- Other Financial Resources
- Hotel Rooms -workers/families
- Children Who Witnessed Violence



-Current Hard-copies; Sex-Offender Registry & Emergency Response Plan: Who, Where



# Preparing for a Mass Violence Incident: Understanding the Most Crucial Needs of Victims, Survivors and Witnesses

The following list recommends the most crucial needs of victims, survivors and witnesses of a mass violence incident in *order of timeliness*. Please consider these needs when developing your community's mass violence preparedness plan.

1. Where to go and where *not to go for help* (i.e., *do not show up at the crime scene!*)
2. Medical care
3. "The basics" – shelter, food, clothing, safety
4. Information (about victims' rights, the case)
5. How to locate loved ones
6. Locations/rooms within Centers (Response, Family Assistance or Resiliency) to ensure victim privacy
7. Psychological First Aid needs
8. Mental health care
9. How to report missing persons
10. Provide information about common reactions to trauma
11. Information about victim compensation, and assistance in completing application forms



Continued

## (continued) Preparing for a Mass Violence Incident: Understanding the Most Crucial Needs of Victims, Survivors and Witnesses

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12. How to access resources, including the wide range of victim assistance services available in the immediate-, short- and long-term
13. Lodging (for family members)
14. Psychoeducation resources
15. Protection from the news media, and tips for dealing with the news media
16. Transportation (local, state, national, international)
17. Legal assistance and advice
18. Guidance in understanding the range of funds available to survivors (which will differ depending upon the MVI)
19. Liaison/intervention with the Department of Motor Vehicles to obtain new identification/drivers' licenses
20. Keys duplicated or made
21. Child care
22. Employer intervention





# Federal Response Teams?

- Tribal lands with federal jurisdiction
- Airline, National Monuments, etc.



## Local Response Teams



- Until the federal response teams can be called in and arrangements made for their arrival, long-term care after other teams are gone

## Another Tribe requests assistance?

(Las Vegas Example)



# Minnesota School Shooting: Red Lake Indian Reservation

On March 21, 2005, a troubled high school sophomore went on a shooting rampage.

Initial crime scene: **A home**

Second crime scene: **High School** where the remaining injuries and fatalities, including the death of the teenage subject, occurred.

•10 fatalities  
and 5 seriously  
injured

•Teachers

•Staff

•Family  
members of  
the deceased  
and injured  
victims

•Communities  
of Red Lake  
Nation

April 19, 1995 - Oklahoma City, OK  
 May 21, 1998 - Springfield, OR  
 April 20, 1999 - Columbine, CO  
 September 11, 2001 - New York City; Arlington, VA; Shanksville, PA  
 April 16, 2007 - Virginia Polytechnic and State University  
 April 3, 2009 - Binghamton, NY  
 November 5, 2009 - Fort Hood, TX  
 January 8, 2011 - Tucson, AZ  
 July 20, 2012 - Aurora, CO  
 August 5, 2012 - Oak Creek, WI  
 December 14, 2012 - Newtown, CT  
 April 15, 2013 - Boston, MA  
 September 16, 2013 - Washington, DC  
 April 2, 2014 - Fort Hood, TX  
 April 13, 2014 - Overland Park, KA  
 June 18, 2105 - Charleston, SC  
 July 16, 2015 - Chattanooga, TN  
 October 1, 2015 - Roseburg, OR  
 November 29, 2015 - Colorado Springs, CO  
 December 2, 2015 - San Bernardino, CA  
 February 20, 2016 - Kalamazoo, MI  
 February 25, 2016 - Hesston, KS  
 June 12, 2016 - Orlando, FL

## Incidents of mass violence and/or terrorism

### **3 most deadly recent events:**

Orlando Pulse nightclub attack: 49 killed and 53 wounded  
 Las Vegas Harvest Festival shooting: 48 killed and 489 wounded  
 Sutherland Springs church shooting: 26 killed and 20 wounded

### **Increasing in frequency:**

Pittsburg Synagogue, California bar shootings

Remainder:

# Far From Simple FAQs



**But...**

**There ARE answers!**

## FAQs

# How will ALL Leaders' success be measured in their handling of the crisis?

**Tribal Chair, Mayor, Police Chief, President or Council Person's cell phones ringing and everyone needs to tell their whole story**



RESPONSE - Many agencies/programs/entities:  
VW Prof MUST be written in to Plan

# Primary Concerns of Family Members

- **What happened?**  
Initial Notification, Immediate Information
- **Where is my loved one?**  
Search / Rescue / Recovery; Hospitalization, Identification of Remains
- **How will I get ongoing information?**  
Information sharing and access to resources, Short-term and long-term, Case Updates, Indictments, Arrests (800#)
- **Where are their personal effects?**  
Processing & return of personal effects / evidence





# **Established Factors in HIGH PROFILE / MASS TRAGEDIES:**

- Multiple victims**
- Intense media coverage**
  - Political atmosphere**
  - Public vicarious trauma**
- Public outpouring of money**
- Service providers may become high profile**
- Normal programs' resources overwhelmed**

**MASS TRAGEDY = HIGH PROFILE**

# **School/Tribal/Other Program Impact:**

- **Staff Overwhelmed**
- **Other office business suspended**
- **Victim needs beyond scope of office services**
- **Coordination of volunteers and donors may be too great to be handled by staff while also meeting victim needs**
- **Public scrutiny intensified**

**What Else?**

**Coalition building – In order to be prepared**



# Prepare, Collaborate and Pray that you never need to use it!



Once you get a written protocol, it will in fact turn out to be

**ONLY A GUIDE,**

As each crisis is different and you will in fact respond to the

**UNIQUE** critical victim needs that arise in that particular **UNIQUE** situation.


In law enforcement, this is the reason we constantly do training qualifications. So that we will be best prepared to respond to **WHATEVER** the emergency, in the most effective and professional manner possible to protect and serve our communities.





# Far From Simple

**How do you assess your  
community's risk of a crisis  
occurring?**





# Where Could It Happen In YOUR Community or Village?

- Schools
- Colleges
- Churches
- Sacred Sites
- Casino/Resort/  
Concerts
- Courthouses
- Government Buildings
- Missing Child
- Vehicle Crash multiple fatal
- Workplace: Disgruntled Employee, Notice of Dismissal, Domestic Violence
- Public Gatherings:
  - Sturgis Motorcycle Rally
  - Monuments,
  - PowWow,
  - Feasts,
  - What Other Special Events

OEM Risk Assessments





# Far From Simple

**What are the persistent crimes that connects mass shooters and terror suspects?**





# How reliably does animal torture predict a future school shooter?



## Animal Cruelty and Interpersonal Violence: Making the Connection

On February 14, 2018, the nation joined the Parkland, Florida community in expressing outrage, grief, and outpourings of support for the 17 victims, survivors, and loved ones affected by the mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. In the aftermath of this horrific act of violence, we learned more about the 19-year old shooter, Nikolas Cruz, and the many “red flags” that were missed. Among the warning signs identified, a history of cruelty toward animals was described by several witnesses. In making this connection, Cruz joins a long line of perpetrators—both high profile killers and “everyday” perpetrators of interpersonal violence — whom threaten, harm or kill animals in addition to human victims.

Through a growing body of research, we now know that animal cruelty can be an indicator—or red flag—for other

*Article written by  
Claire Ponder Selib,  
Deputy Director  
National  
Organization  
for  
Victim  
Assistance  
August 2018*

# The persistent crime that connects mass shooters and terror suspects:



## Domestic violence



Time and time again, spasms of violence in public places have been followed by investigations into the attackers and suspects. Many of those probes have unearthed reports of violence or **threatening behavior against women in their lives**. While research has shown that domestic violence is not universally a factor preceding public attacks, it has cropped up often enough following high-profile incidents to constitute a disturbing, recognizable pattern.

- In June, James T. Hodgkinson began **shooting at members of Congress** at a baseball practice in Virginia; years earlier, police records show he was accused of grabbing his teenage daughter by the hair and punching a woman during the same episode.
- Earlier this year, authorities arrested Esteban Santiago and accused him of killing five people in a shooting rampage at the Fort Lauderdale, Fla., international airport. He had drawn police attention in his Alaska home town for reports of domestic violence.





NEXUS - mass shooters and terror suspects:

## Domestic violence

HANDOUT

- In February 2016, a 38-year-old man named Cedric Ford opened fire on a Kansas highway and then at a **lawn mower factory where he worked**. About 90 minutes before, authorities said, [he was served with a restraining order](#) meant to keep him from contact with someone he had abused.
- That shooting came about three months after police said Robert Lewis Dear [began firing at a Planned Parenthood clinic](#) in Colorado Springs, killing [one police officer and two other people](#) there. Before the November 2015 shooting in Colorado, at least two of Dear's three ex-wives had [accused him of physical abuse](#), and in 1992 he was arrested and accused of sexual violence and rape.
- Other attacks have been carried out after threats against women. In 2014, Elliot Rodger, a 22-year-old college student, rampaged through a **California college town** after recording a video [making explicit his desire to attack women](#). He ultimately killed six people, including three men stabbed to death in his apartment.



NEXUS - mass shooters and terror suspects:

## Domestic violence

HANDOUT

- Before Seung Hui Cho stalked through the **Virginia Tech campus** in 2007, killing 32 students and teachers, two female students had said he was harassing them.
- Violence at home has also preceded terrorist attacks. Before Omar Mateen rampaged through **Pulse nightclub** in Orlando last year, his ex-wife described him as abusive and said he beat her repeatedly. His second wife, to whom he was married at the time of the Pulse attack, has been arrested and charged with aiding and abetting his attack; in court filings, her attorneys said that Mateen “was both verbally and physically abusive to her” and had threatened to kill her.
- The elder **Boston Marathon bomber**, Tamerlan Tsarnaev, was accused of domestic violence in 2009.

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-nation/wp/2017/08/15/the-persistent-crime-that-connects-mass-shooters-and-terror-suspects-domestic-violence/?utm\\_term=.5e78951e06e8](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-nation/wp/2017/08/15/the-persistent-crime-that-connects-mass-shooters-and-terror-suspects-domestic-violence/?utm_term=.5e78951e06e8)

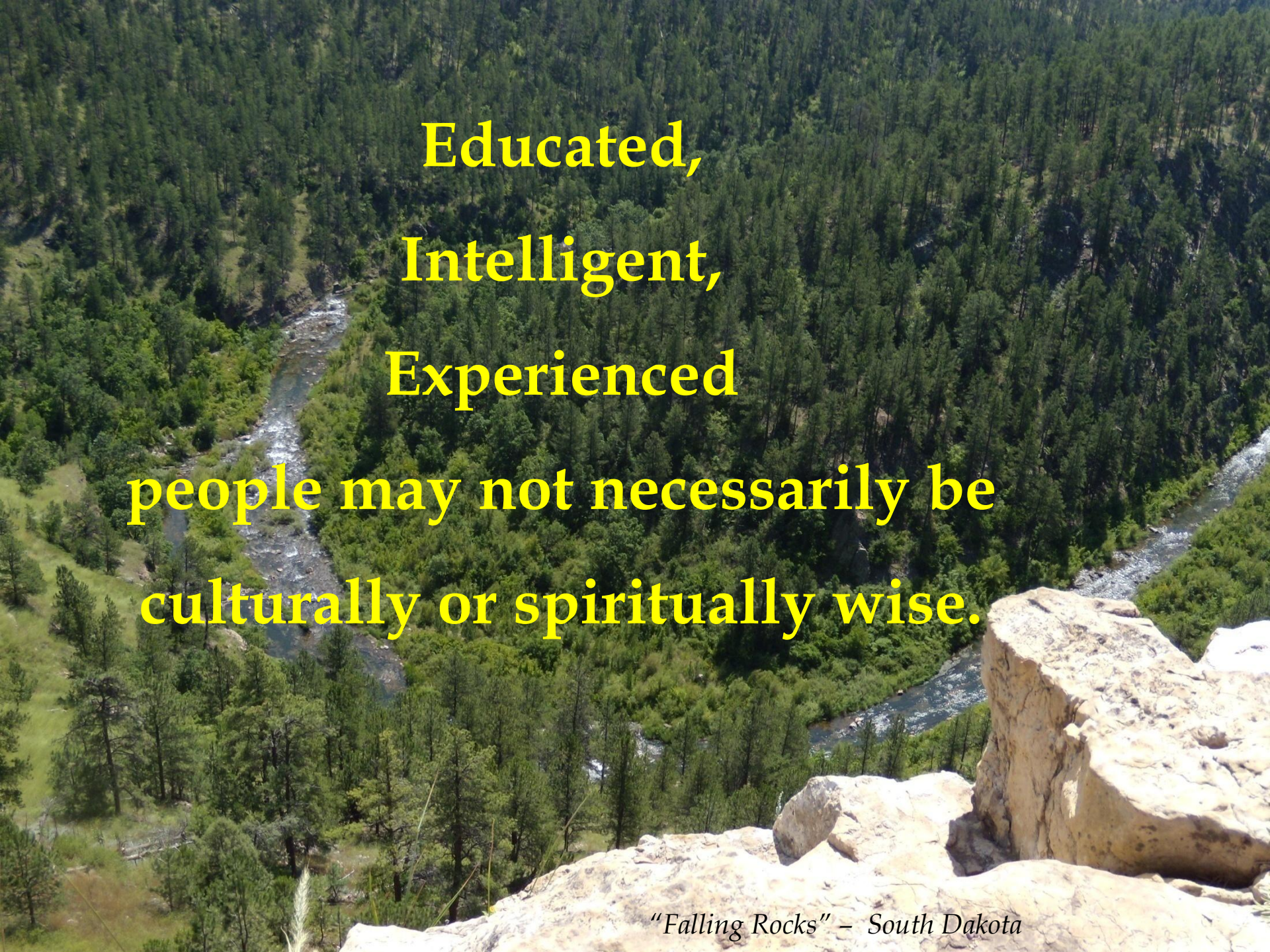


# Far From Simple

**How will harmony be achieved with those that respond from other areas, informing them of local culture and spirituality during times of crisis?**

RL-Local Officer briefings – Local VWProf? -- Write it into the Plan



An aerial photograph of a river winding through a dense, green forest. In the foreground, large, light-colored rocks are visible, suggesting a rocky riverbank or a cliffside. The text is overlaid in a bold, yellow font.

**Educated,  
Intelligent,  
Experienced  
people may not necessarily be  
culturally or spiritually wise.**

*"Falling Rocks" – South Dakota*

# 4 Ways SELF-DEPLOYED First Responders Can Wreak Havoc

1. Lack of coordination
2. Lack of equipment
3. Lack of communication
4. Lack of local culture & spirituality

“Y’all come on down” and “drop in anytime” don’t apply. Every seasoned responder knows the chaos of crisis and the desire to get help quickly. No one wants to fault a hero for showing up to help. The reality is that there are diminishing returns when self-deployed responders arrive immediately after an event. Unfortunately it can become an incident commander’s nightmare.

*“Falling Rocks” – South Dakota*



**Far From Simple**

**As a leader how will you assess**

**Workplace Safety**

**for your staff?**



# Workplace Safety

❖ **Environmental**

**Law Enforcement?**

❖ **Physical**

**EPA?**

❖ **Mental**

**YOU?**

❖ **Emotional**

**Who will declare safe  
to provide services  
on-scene or other  
locations?**





# Far From Simple

**How will your jurisdiction access  
emergency response funding in  
times of mass violence crisis?**







# Request Emergency Aid



## **OVC:**

800#, website

Emergency Funding

Resources

## **NSVRC:**

(PSA) Awareness  
Materials specific to  
follow critical incidents

DV, SA

**“It won’t happen to us” is not a victim-centered emergency plan!**


**-You Must Have A Response Plan –**



# Far From Simple

**What is each discipline's role in the response plan?**

**How will you and your program or agency fit in?**



# BEFORE IT HAPPENS:

## *What Programs/Agencies Should Be Included?*

- 1. Are they "written in"?***
- 2. Do they have training?***
- 3. Identifying clothing?***
- 4. Photo Credentials?***

- Identify the resources that each agency/program or entity can provide during a critical incident
- What issues need to be addressed
- What training should be provided *in addition* to Basic / Advanced Crisis Response Training





# Victim Assistance Personnel:



- 1. Are you "written in"?***
- 2. Do you have training?***
- 3. Identifying clothing?***
- 4. Photo Credentials?***

- Have you met with your Tribal Office of Emergency Management?

Take flyer, have your elevator speech ready to show how your program can be of assistance in smaller crisis situations AND how your assistance is applicable to a crisis that produces more victims than can normally be handled locally; how you can come alongside regional teams.





# Equally Important:

**Who needs to be there –**

**Who doesn't?**

**How will you prevent Registered  
Sex Offenders from being part of  
the search party?**



**Technology?**

# Technology:

Footage related to the recent Las Vegas shooting, a substantial amount turned in by civilians, has amounted to more than 40 terabytes.

**Las Vegas FBI SAC Rouse said video provided by the public has helped tighten a timeline, which has seen several adjustments.**

**"We can't say 'thank you' enough."**

**ON THE OTHER HAND...**

- **Sensitivity to victims/survivors/families**
- **Confidentiality**





# **Crime Victims Compensation**





# Crime Victims Compensation

## State Crime Victim Comp:

*MN CVC on-scene – expedite forms*

*-VS took CVP to meet w/families, explain entitlements & gathered funeral home bills, hospital bills, etc to be*

*paid directly by CVP*



**WHAT DOES YOUR STATE VICTIM COMP COVER:**

**When the tragedy happens it will be too late to find out?**



# Far From Simple

**What is the quickest, yet most effective way to facilitate a coordinated crisis response to victim families in all communities?**





“Hope for the best”

**is not a victim-centered  
response plan**





Many More

- Questions to be answered
- Topics to be covered

So many topics/So little time... *today*



# Helping

## Victims of Mass Violence & Terrorism

PLANNING, RESPONSE, RECOVERY, AND RESOURCES

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

ABOUT THE TOOLKIT

PARTNERSHIPS & PLANNING

RESPONSE

RECOVERY


TOOLS

## Who Should Use the Toolkit?

We developed this toolkit primarily for the following professionals, but it can be used by any individual or organization responsible for planning and responding to incidents of mass violence and terrorism.

- Law enforcement officials.
- Prosecutors' offices.
- Victim service providers.
- Emergency planning managers.
- Health care providers (including mental health)
- State Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) administrators: compensation and assistance.

[www.ovc.gov/pubs/mvt-toolkit/](http://www.ovc.gov/pubs/mvt-toolkit/)



*What steps need to be taken in order to be prepared in advance and have a plan for an effective victim-centered response to mass violence in your Tribal communities?*

**GROUP ASSIGNMENT:**

Each group make a list of requirements necessary in order to have teams consistently trained and ready for victim-centered response to multiple fatalities & multiple injuries in your own community *OR* a callout to assist with similar mass violence from another Tribe.



# Do you know who handles emergency response plans for your

- Tribe?
- County?
- State?
- Federal?

OEM – Office of Emergency Management





## Identify Existing Resources and Resource Gaps Within the Community

- Identify current resources available in the community.
- Identify additional resources to address any unmet needs.
- Identify special populations and geographical issues in your area that may need specialized resources.





Does your  
emergency  
response plan  
already include a  
victim assistance  
component?

### Victim Assistance Protocols

Protocol*
Contact List Protocol
Committee Meeting Protocol
Practice Drills and Exercises Protocol
Incident Command System Protocol
Communications Protocol
Family Assistance Center Protocol
Victim Identification Protocol
Notification Protocol
Planning and Preparedness Grants and Emergency Funding Assistance Protocol
Volunteer Management Protocol
Donation Management Protocol (Funds, Goods, and Services)
Criminal Justice System: Victim Support Protocol
Community Resiliency Protocol

## Tribal Leaders Building a Victim-Centered Response to Mass Violence

# HANDOUT

- 2018 HANDOUT MASS VIOLENCE TOOLKIT
- 2018 HANDOUT Persistent Crime that connects mass shooters
- HANDOUT Averted-School-Violence-Fact-Sheet\_Police-Foundation
- HANDOUT CHECKLIST Tribal Leaders Building a Victim-Centered Response to Mass Violence
- HANDOUT FBI Analysis of Active Shooter Incidents May 2018
- HANDOUT How reliably does animal torture predict a future school shooter

**Newly released:**

**National Mass Violence & Victimization Resource Center**

[See next slide](#)





# National Mass Violence & Victimization Resource Center

sponsored by the **National Crime Victim Research and Treatment Center at the  
Medical University of South Carolina**

through a Cooperative Grant with the Office for Victims of Crime, U.S.  
Department of Justice:

[http:// www.nmvvrc.org/](http://www.nmvvrc.org/)

The online Resource Center includes six “buckets” that are filled with excellent resources that focus on Readiness – Response – Resilience relevant to mass violence incidents:

**Bucket One: Prepare your Community**

**Bucket Two: Help Survivors**

**Bucket Three: Self-help**

**Bucket Four: Rebuild your Community**

**Bucket Five: Science about Mass Violence**

**Bucket Six: Other Large-scale Crimes**

At the bottom of the website landing page under “**MEDIA**,” there are great tips for

**ELECTED OFFICIALS**, journalists, survivors and advocates on effective media relations during and after mass violence crimes – a **HUGE CONCERN** of all!





**There are no experts-  
Only people who have tried to do their best  
and  
Are willing to share what they have learned.**



**Marlys Big Eagle**

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