

PROTECTING YOUR CONGREGATIONS AGAINST AN ACTIVE SHOOTER

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The opinions of the presenters do not necessarily reflect the opinions of Church Mutual Insurance Company.



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& SECURITY CONSULTANTS**

Excellence in Faith & Service

AREAS IN FOCUS

- Do congregations really need a plan?
- Case study & decade of shooters
- Mentality of a shooter
- Shooter factsheet
- Considerations for a robust security and response plan
- Other important considerations
- Q&A Session

DO CONGREGATIONS NEED A PLAN?

CASE STUDY

Sept. 15, 1999 Church in Texas

- Over 150 teenagers at church singing hymns.
- Suspect entered and shot 14 people.
- Ended up killing 7 people and injuring another 7 before killing himself.



March 12, 2005 Church in Wisconsin

- Suspect opened fire on the congregation, killing 7 and wounding 4 before taking his own life.
- He was described by people that knew him as a normal guy with no warning signs.



Dec 9, 2007

Church in Colorado

- Suspect was asked to leave a youth center.
- Returned, opened fire killing 2 and injured 2.
- 35 minutes later, he went to a church and killed 2 people.



**Colo. Church
Gunman 'Hated
Christians'**

Was expelled from
missionary school
where he killed 2

March 8, 2009 Church in Illinois

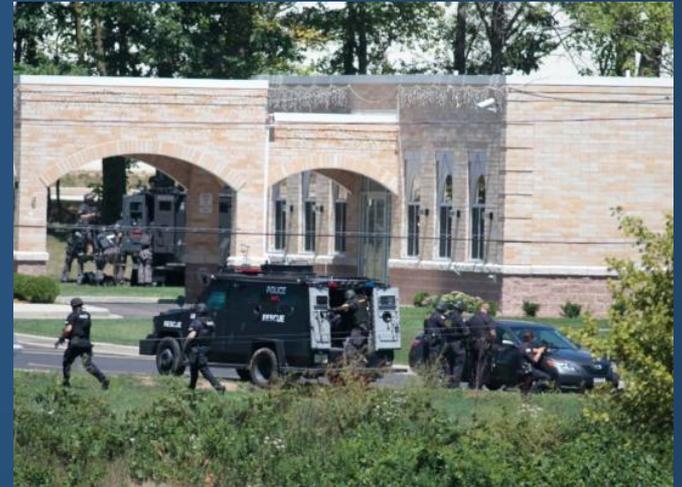
- Suspect walks into the church and shoots the pastor dead, point blank.
- Several church members confronted the shooter with aggression and overpowered him.



August 5, 2012

Temple in Wisconsin

- A male suspect fatally shot 6 people and wounded 4 others in a mass shooting.
- The suspect committed suicide by shooting himself in the head.



March 31, 2013

Church in Ohio

- A suspect killed his father at the church.
- Afterward, he shouted about Allah and God.
- The suspect was later arrested by the police.



U.S. Faith Based Shooter by State Inside the Sanctuary (1999-Present)



Active Shooter Defined

Armed person(s) whose action is immediately causing death or great bodily injury.

Mentality of a Shooter

- Will continue until stopped
- Primary Motive: Revenge
- Other Motives:
 - Hatred, domestic or marital issues, child custody dispute, congregation dispute, denied services, disappointment in leadership's decision, physical/mental illness, financial trouble, mad at the world
 - Or it could simply be anything
 - Are there pre-indicators?

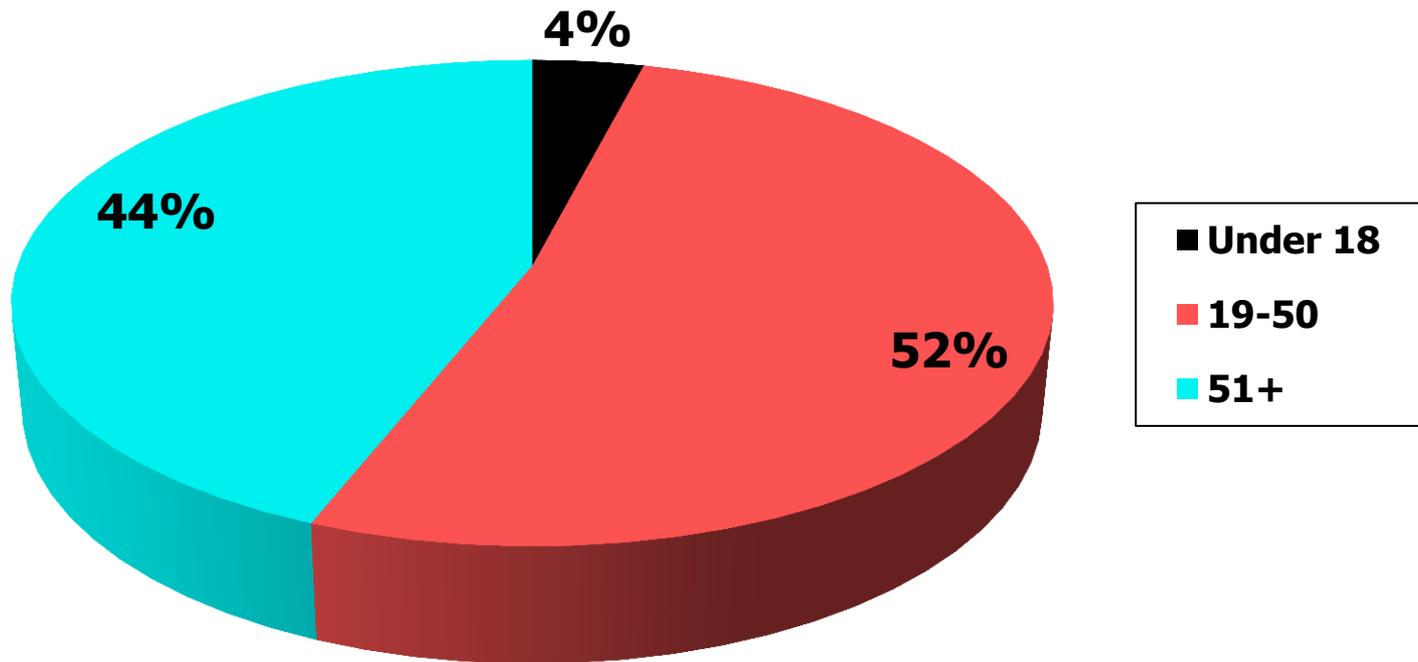
Basic Analysis

Key Findings:

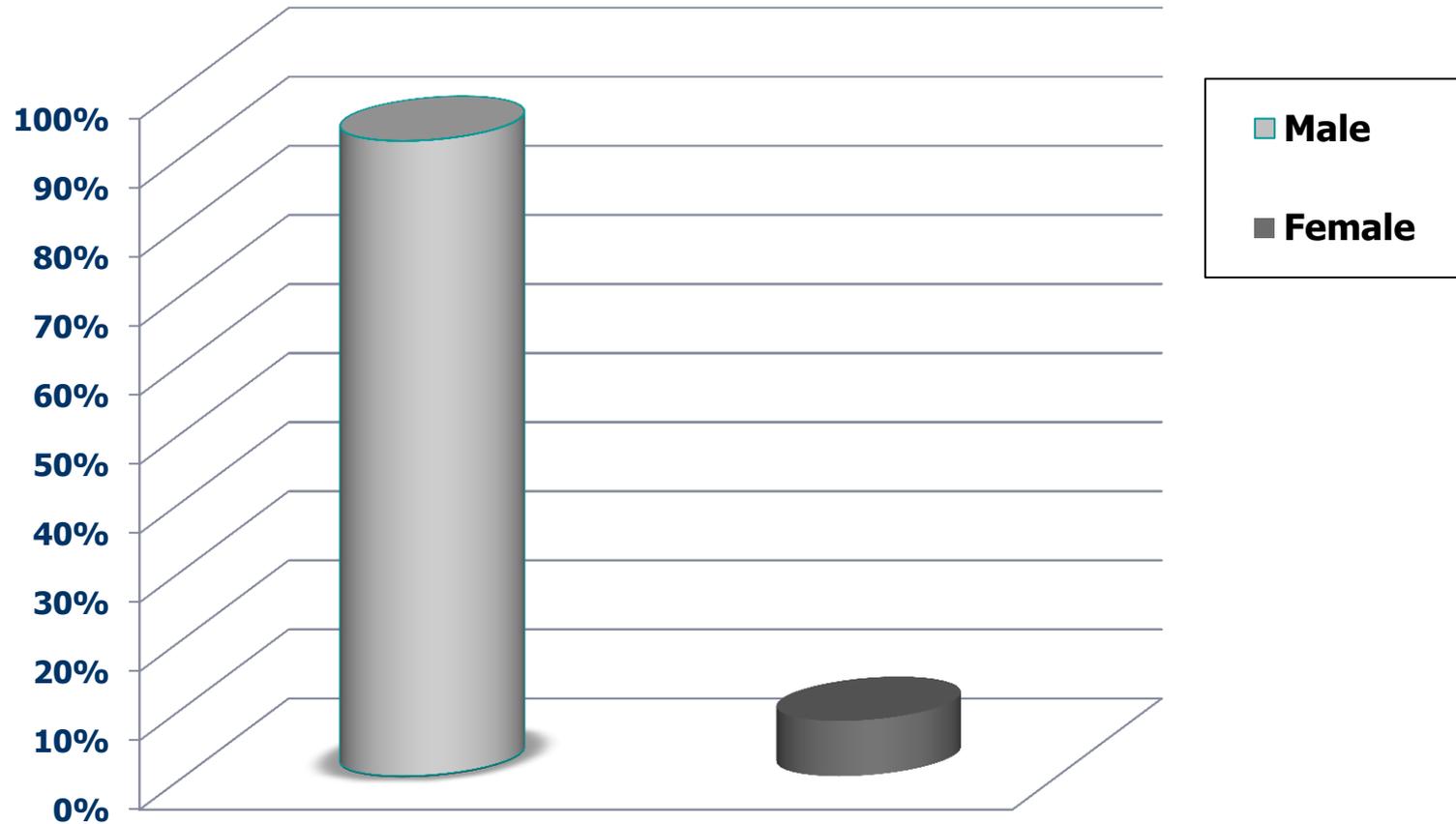
- Unless person communicates intent directly
 - Predicting an active shooter incident is difficult
 - More difficult in large congregations

SHOOTER FACTSHEET

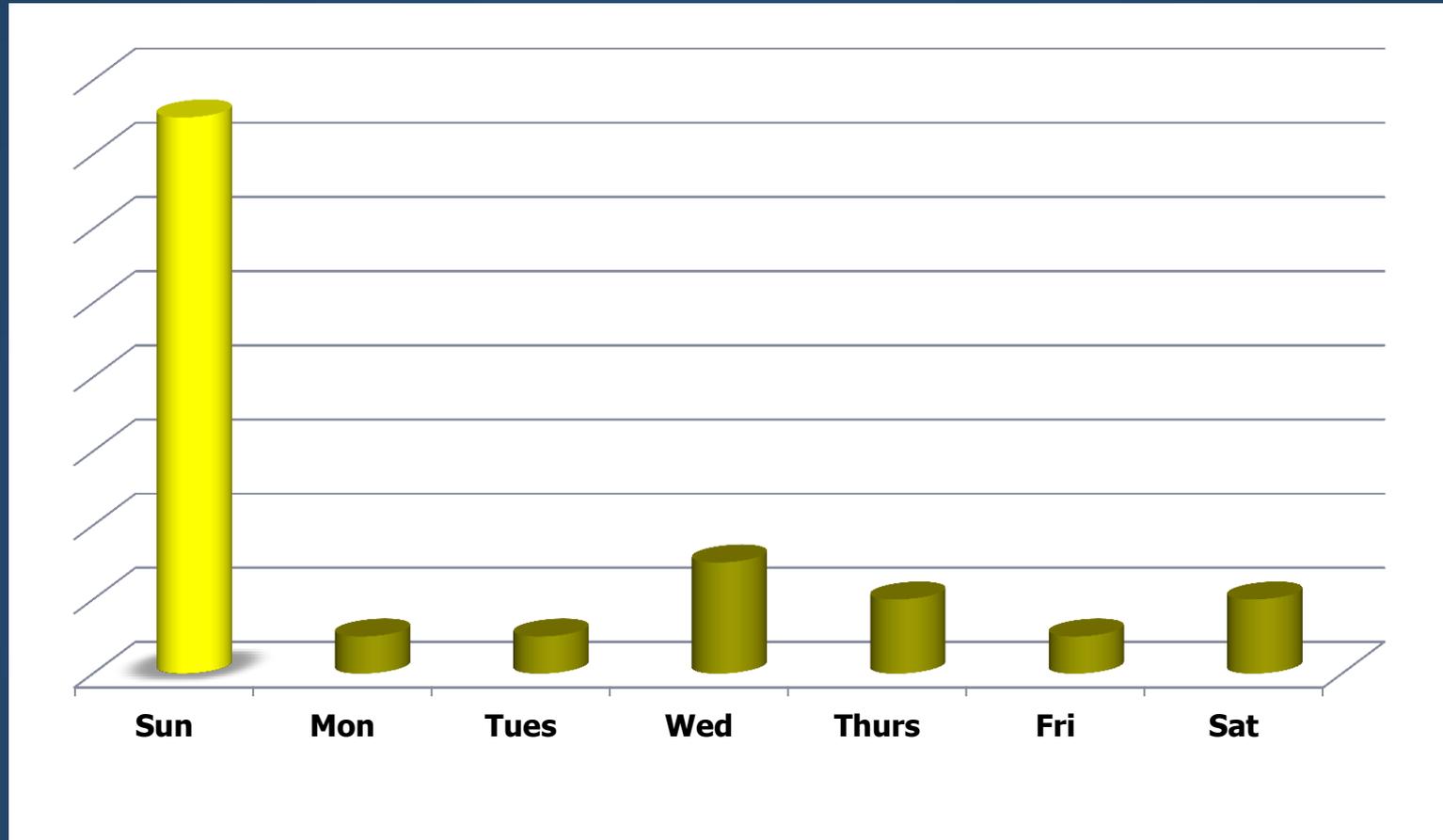
Shooters by Age



Shooters by Gender

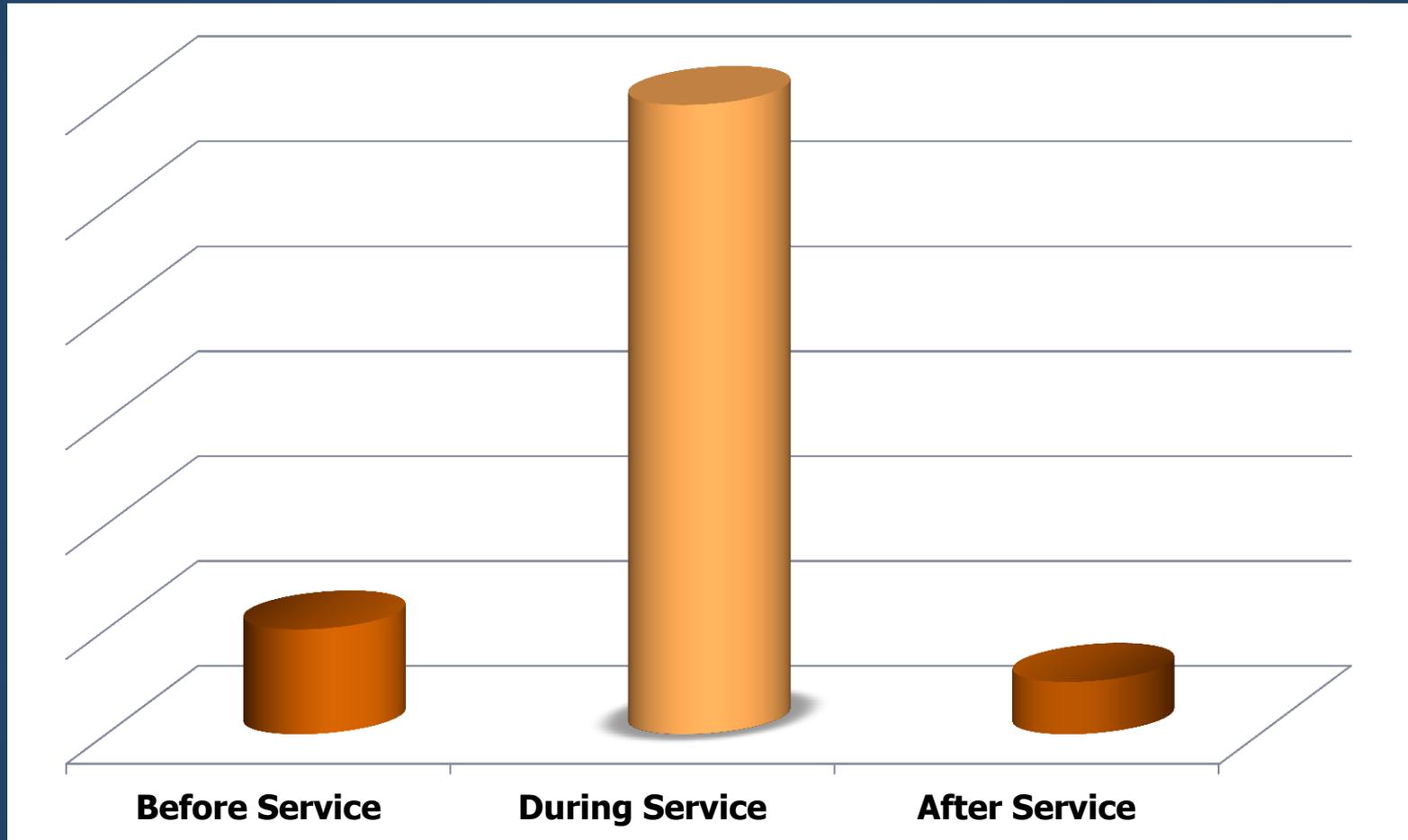


Day of Choice



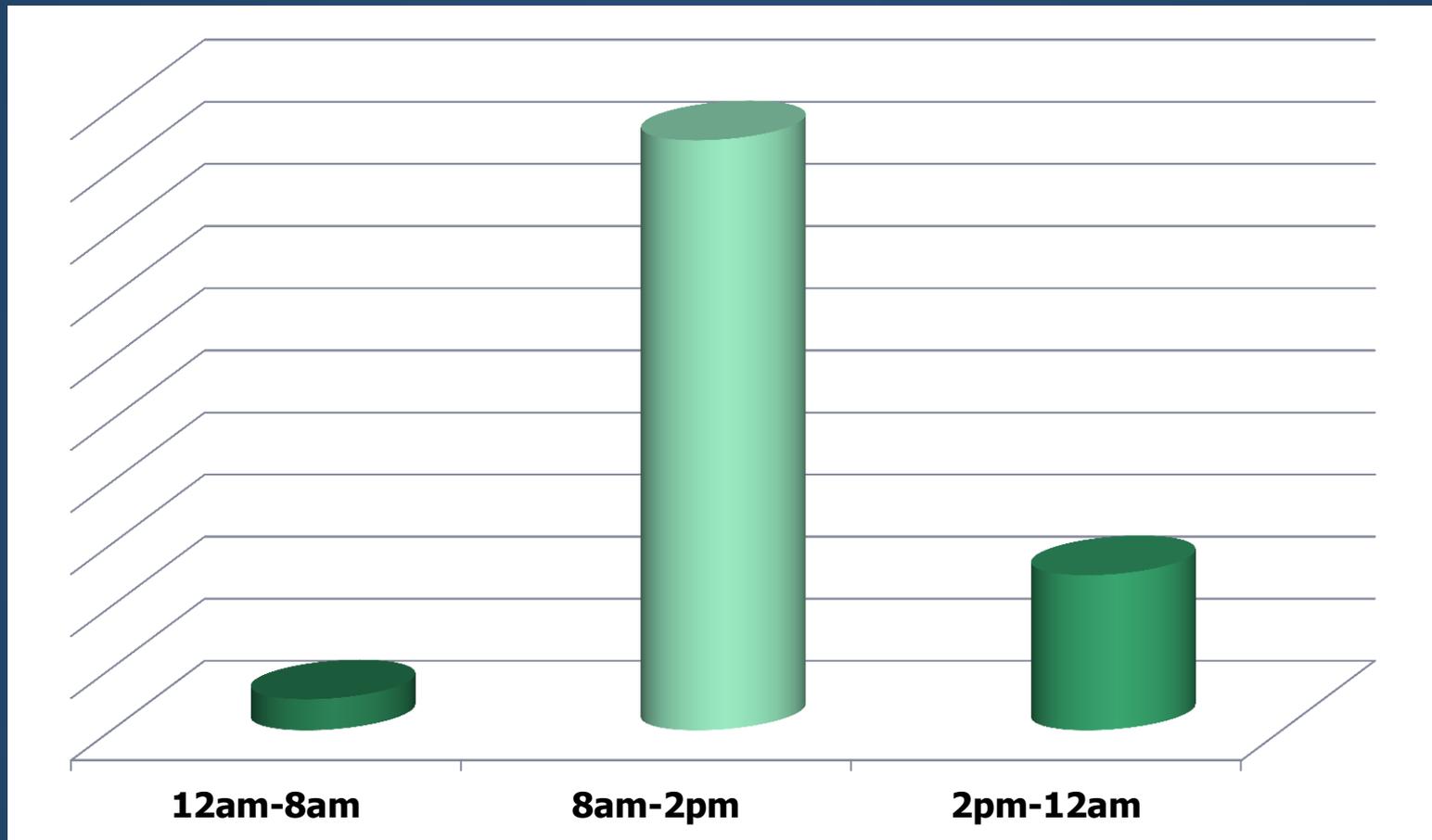
- The idea may brew for weeks or months
- Pre-implementation 2 days prior to the attack
- Higher risk on Sundays

Period of Choice on Sunday



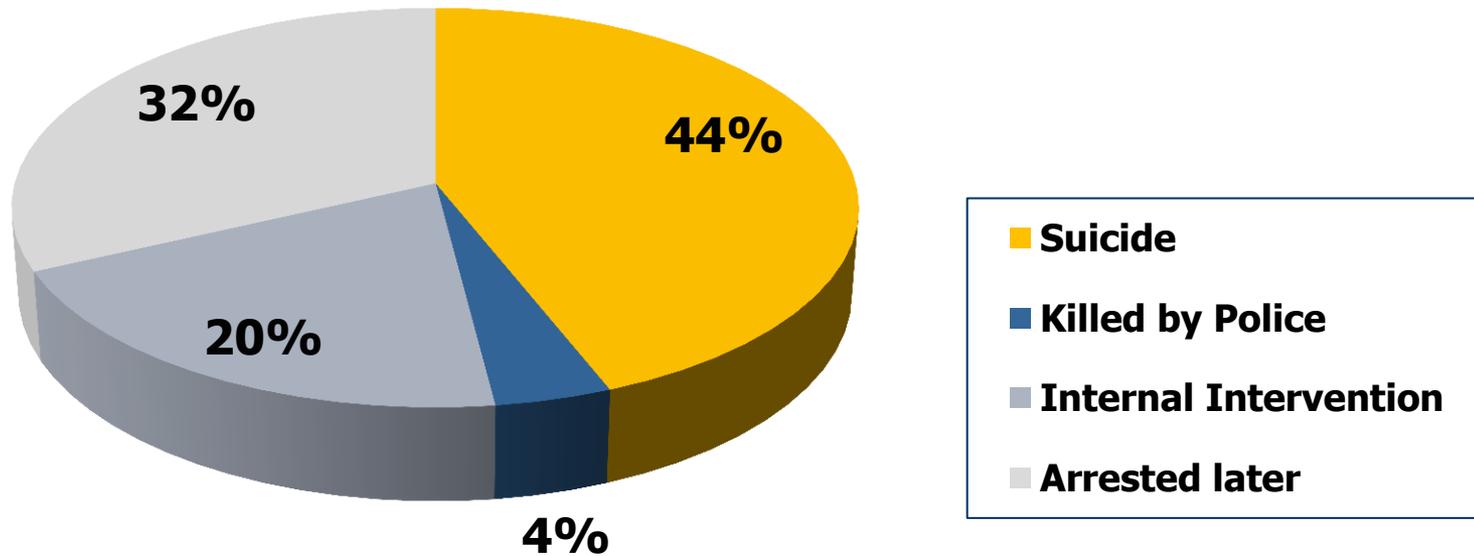
- Usually after service begins

Time of the Day



- Can happen at any time
- Key Factors: Occupancy and opportunity

Shooter Outcome



- Most incidents end before police arrive

CONSIDERATIONS FOR A ROBUST SECURITY AND RESPONSE PLAN

The following are considerations for a robust security and response plan and does not cover every conceivable situation or all variables.

Your plan

- Initial assessment
- Promote awareness among your congregation
- Preparedness for key staff
 - Recommended course of action
 - Post-incident course of action
 - Evacuation process & assembly point(s)
 - Post-incident counseling process
 - Media protocol
- Considerations for armed security

Initial Assessment

Factors to consider:

- Size and layout of facility
- Size of the congregation
- Internal & external risk factors
- Lockdown capability
- Number of exits
- Location of children's ministry or other programs
- Unarmed or armed security & state laws
- Pre-established emergency response protocols
- Training for congregation, staff, & security
- Communication methods
- Police/sheriff/medic response time
- And many more

Promoting Awareness Among Congregation

- **Be proactive about engaging your congregation**
 - **Larger congregation may want to consider promoting awareness with everyone or by groups**
 - **Smaller congregation could address their congregation as a whole**
 - **Or via Newsletters/brochures**

Content



ACTIVE SHOOTER

A SURVIVAL MINDSET

- Recommended Action
 - Before any incident
 - During incident
 - Post-incident

Before any incident

- Urge congregation to maintain general awareness
- Encourage them to report unusual situation to staff

During an active shooter incident

- Include recommended course of action such as
 - Get out if safe to do so
 - Call for help
 - Unable to get out, then hide horizontally
 - If viable, lock door
 - Face to face contact, go for weapon

Post active shooter incident

- **List evacuation expectations inside your brochure**
- **Indicate services available**
 - **Counseling and prayer time**
- **Cooperation with law enforcement**
 - **Police may need to speak to witnesses**

Prepare Key Staff

- Leadership
- Ushers
- Children's ministry staff
- Youth ministry staff
- Volunteers who play critical roles

Course of action should cover:

- Shooter on premises but not at key staff location
- Shooter enters key staff location

Shooter on Church Premises

Applicable key staff options:

- Identify the general location of the threat
- Alert others
- Call 911...seek shelter or lockdown in a safe place
- Lock door or blockade with any furniture
- Turn lights off
- Lead people to hide between or behind furniture
- Ask congregation/others not to huddle together

What If You Are Outdoors?

Guide congregation/children to:

- Seek shelter in any safe building nearby
- If not practical to do so:
 - Run with group toward opposite/safe direction
 - Spread out in small pockets
 - Run between objects
 - Upon arriving at safer location, remain there

Shooter Enters Your Location

Congregation should implement safety options

Applicable key staff should:

- **Consider the following factor**
 - **Shooter's distance from staff, congregation, & children**
- **Key staff/others close to shooter should act**
- **Call 911 as soon as possible**

Post-Incident for Key Staff

- **If evacuation is necessary**
 - Key staff should guide people to assembly point(s)
 - Assist with headcount if applicable
- **Counseling process**
 - This may entail prayer & encouragement

Post-Incident for Key Staff (continued)

- **Media protocol for Key Staff**
 - Staff/others should know your media protocol
 - Control your message
- **Social media factor**
 - Key staff should Discourage people from posting info on social media
 - May cause confusion and make it more difficult to manage situation at hand

Are These Measures Enough?

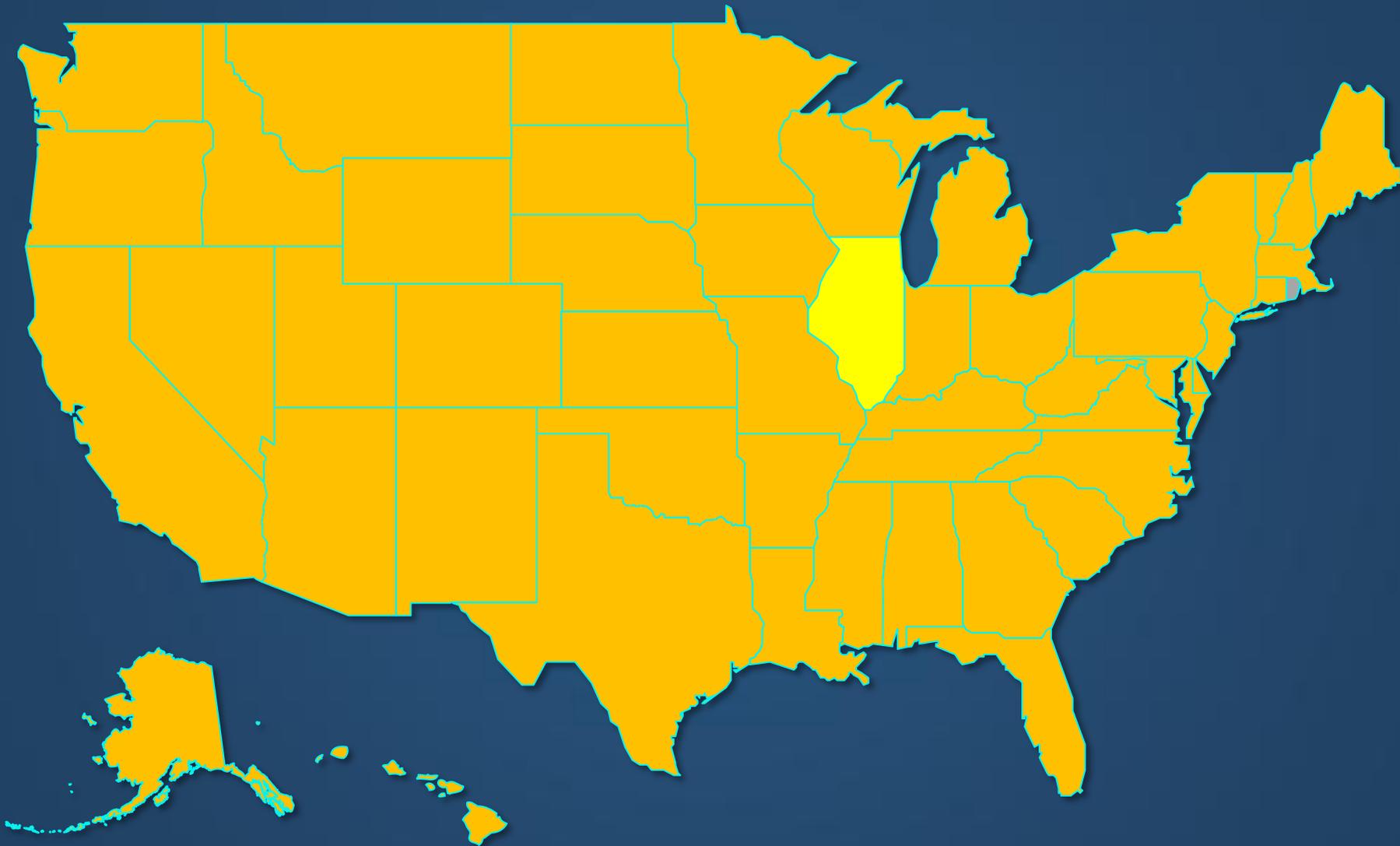
Recent Assessment:

- Awareness & staff response plans great...
- A New Factor – Advanced First Aid training
- More robust security response plan needed
 - Security team

The Basics of a Security Team

- Very complicated subject & process
 - No easy path. State laws vary
- Options to discuss with legal team:
 - 1) Internal armed security team via:
 - 2nd amendment
 - CCW
 - Security guard certification
 - 2) External armed security guard company
- Involve consultant or legal team

General CCW Laws by State



Armed Guard Certification by State

Alabama	Hawaii	Massachusetts	New Mexico	South Dakota
Alaska	Idaho	Michigan	New York	Tennessee
Arizona	Illinois	Minnesota	N. Carolina	Texas
Arkansas	Indiana	Mississippi	North Dakota	Utah
California	Iowa	Missouri	Ohio	Vermont
Colorado	Kansas	Montana	Oklahoma	Virginia
Connecticut	Kentucky	Nebraska	Oregon	Washington
Delaware	Louisiana	Nevada	Pennsylvania	West Virginia
Florida	Maine	N. Hampshire	Rhode Island	Wisconsin
Georgia	Maryland	New Jersey	S. Carolina	Wyoming

- ◆ Most Regulated
- ◆ Less Regulated
- ◆ Minimal Regulated

Internal Armed Security Team

If congregation decides to arm & state laws permits:

- **Decide if plain clothes or uniformed security**
 - **Current/retired Police officers is a good option**
- **Establish a committee system**
 - **They decide the # of armed persons needed**
 - **Establish a process to approve or disapprove requests**
 - **Possible Committee representation:**
 - **Board members**
 - **Senior pastor & elders**
 - **Legal counsel**
 - **An expert or experienced person**

Selection criteria & protocol

Some considerations:

- Do you arm every interested person?
- Establish a standard selection criteria
- How does the leadership select who is authorized?

Establish use of force policy

Some Considerations:

- How strict should your policy be?
- Get input from legal team and the police
- Direct and straight to the point
 - State your goals
 - Define lethal and less lethal weapons
 - Define danger to life or great bodily injury
 - When should less lethal weapon be considered?
 - When can lethal force be used?
 - Who provides the weapons to security team?
- Must be in compliance with the law
- Identify liabilities/risk factors if lethal force is used

Training your armed security team

Considerations:

- Establish standardized training program
- Initial or ongoing training could entail:
 - Orientation to facility or layout
 - Use of force policy
 - Briefing & communication methods
 - Weapons training
 - Active shooter response training

Who manages the internal church security team?

- Consider putting this in place
- The manager should:
 - Have strong leadership skills
 - Be reliable, experienced & well trained
 - Have excellent critical thinking skills
- Responsibilities may include:
 - Compliance with the law & church rules
 - Handle scheduling
 - Handle training of armed and unarmed staff
 - Restock brochures for congregation
 - Liaison with law enforcement

Partnership with local police

- Meet with them periodically
- Initial meeting could entail topics of mutual interest such as:
 - Orienting the police to facility and property layout
 - Access to your facility (issued keys?)
 - Their arrival time
 - Communication methods
 - Discuss how to identify your armed security (if you have one in place)

External Armed Security Company

- State laws vary
- Pro and cons
- Vetting is necessary

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- **Advanced first aid training for key staff**
- **Have multiple exit point at sanctuary/event centers**
- **Make sure exit signs are installed**
- **Maintain staff presence inside the lobby during service**
- **Depending on the size of your church, consider monitoring the parking lot as well**
- **Invest in a low cost camera system**

Q&A SESSION

Due to the high volume of questions, presenters will not be able to respond to every question submitted.

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