

Columbine, Beslan and Beyond: Preparing for the No Win Scenario

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The public expects law enforcement to intervene in acts of violence as part of our duties. Increasing numbers of attacks on schools gave rise to the need for immediate response by better-equipped and tactically trained officers. Prior to the Columbine Massacre, officers were trained to secure a perimeter and wait for the SWAT Team. Increased casualties were attributed to the lack of rapid intervention at Columbine H.S. in 1999. The incident Beslan School massacre in Russia in 2004 further increased the need for a change in tactics and mental preparation. Information was obtained through interviews, surveys, seminars and readings to address the current tactics, mindset, and the possible future threats. This information offers suggestions and a course of action for preparation for the “no win” scenario.