

# **THREAT ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING**

**MODULE ONE – UNIT FOUR**

**Combat Academy Instructor Training Programme**

# THREAT ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING

## MODULE ONE – UNIT FOUR

### Learning Outcomes

The aims of this unit are to enable you to:

- Have a broad based knowledge of personal safety, planning and threat assessment.
- To understand threat and proportionate response / reasonable force commensurate to the threat levels.
- To be able to create and implement a workable threat assessment model.

When considering reasonable force which was discussed at length in unit 1, we must always come back to a proportionate and reasonable response as defined by “a man in the street” and dictated by the level of actual or perceived threat.

It is also important to realise that the level of threat is dynamic and dependent on the intent of the attacker and also their ability.

### Types of Attack (Intent)

When considering the types of attack that may happen you have to consider both the type of

## TUTOR TALK



To understand reasonable force, you must consider the attacker’s intent and what they want from the victim. Any response must be proportionate to the level of threat to fall within the law of reasonable force. On the other side and separate from the law any response must be enough to stop the attack and keep the victim safe. Discuss whether or not it is always possible to respond with the realms of reasonable force.

attacker, i.e. their motivation and also their method of attack and ability to do you harm. To explain further, the types of attacker are listed below:

- Robbery
- Sexual
- Hate
- Harm
- Mentally Related
- Intoxication Related
- Social influence

The list above relates to the attacker motivation rather than the method of attack.

To explore the differences in motivation, consider the following:

### **Robbery**

They want something from you! If this item is given, then the attack is typically over with no harm to the victim.

### **Sexual**

They also want something from you but that this item is priceless and giving it can result in irreversible harm and even death of the victim.

### **Hate**

The attacker wants to inflict physical and emotional harm on the victim and that there is considerable hate-fed emotion behind the attack.

### **Harm**

The intention is to assault the victim. The reward here is harder to spot and could be for self-gratification. It could also be to fit into a gang or win over peers / rise in a pecking order. With this type of attack, the victim will usually percent an easy target. The motivation behind this one usually contains a low amount of emotional fuel which means that a small amount of effective resistance will act like water on a small fire and take away the heat of the attack very quickly.

## Mentally Related

The motivation could actually defy logic and it is possible that very little profiling has been done. This is very true in the case of a deranged attacker who is lashing out at everything and everyone. This is not the case, however with a cold predatorial psychopath. This type of attacker will go through all of the usual profiling and will behave much like the person who is looking for a specific profile – possibly even more so.

## Intoxication Related

The motivation here will usually not be logical and there will be many barriers to using psychology and verbal skills.

## Social Influence

Many young men in particular can feel pressured into having a fight or committing an attack by a group of their peers. They may even feel embarrassed and ashamed if they do not carry out the attack that is expected or perceived to be expected.

## Method of Attack

The other side to the threat assessment links in with the Methods of attack. This is covered in the DEFOF physical module. In outline, it considers the mechanical methods of attack including:

- Knives and bladed weapons
- Firearms
- Explosives
- Missiles
- Harmful Fluids
- Body Fluids
- Vehicles
- Group attacks
- Blunt Weapons
- Punches
- Kicks
- Other Strikes

- Grabs
- Psychological
- Vehicles

## Consider the types of attacker above and what you could do to de-escalate a situation or not. Consider how their intent may dictate your response level.

In order to assess the threat, a Threat Assessment model can be used which considers the intent of an attacker, or TYPE of an attack, linked to the intent and the severity of the injury which relates to the METHOD used to give you a response code. Any response code of 7 and above means you are defending your life:

Intent 1- 5  
Severity 1-5  
Maximum score = 10

For example:

### **A gun attack / robbery**

Intent 1  
Severity 5  
Threat rating and response code=6

The robber never wanted to kill you, only to take your wallet

### **A gun attack within a hate crime:**

Intent 3  
Severity 5  
Threat rating and response code= 8

## Additional Factors

When considering the response code, there may also be additional factors to consider. The 4 F's (Factors) can be found within the personal safety section and relate to:

## Physical Factors

Are you weak or do you appear weak? Do you match the physical profile of a victim?

## Geographical Factors

Is the location isolated, is the location dark, is there an escape route, is there help, is it populated?

## Circumstantial Factors

Are you in the wrong place at the wrong time, are you alone?

## Reactional Factors

How you react in the moment dynamically, making the right choices and decisions  
The impact this has on the attacker.

The above factors may influence the response code in either a positive or negative way. We give these factors a + or – rating of 3. This should be applied to the response code prior to considering the proportionate response.

## The Threat Equation

The entire equation should look like this:

$$\mathbf{T = I + S + F = R}$$

Where T= Threat, I = Intent, S= Severity, F = Factors affecting response and R = Response code.

In plain terms, the threat equals the intent figure given to the type of attacker plus the severity of any injury pertaining to the method used by the attacker. The Factors to be considered are then applied by adding or subtracting up to 3 points and then a final response code is output.

An example would be a knife wielder could have a figure of 5 applied as this is a deadly weapon. The man seems to be deranged which means that the intent could be high at 4. The threat so far sits at a 9. Luckily, this has happened in the middle of an event which is being protected by police who are present. Simply stepping back may eliminate the personal threat. The circumstantial factor is considered to have a minus of 3 which reduces some of the risk taking the figure down to 6. This is the final response code which although still significant is probably now not deadly!

Using a threat and risk assessment model as in the one above starts to give you an understanding of how the law would consider a proportionate and reasonable response when defending yourself. Clearly, it is very hard to predict the intent of the attacker as we are unable to read minds. We can however, read body language and verbal cues to work out why we are being attacked and this may give us a good indication as to the intent. An example would be where a mugger pulls a gun on you, you disarm and discharge the weapon killing the attacker. In court, you may actually end up being charged for murder or manslaughter. The prosecution may note that whilst a gun can kill you that the attacker never intended to kill you and that a life for a wallet is not a fair trade! Clearly there is also a counter argument that you had reason to believe that you were in fear of losing your life but the case is not cut and dry.

A defensible case would be where you disarmed your attacker and restrained them with use of the firearm whilst calling the police.