

# CASE STUDY - TERRORISM

## SIMPLE STEPS YOU CAN TAKE - LIFE SAVING SKILLS

Two British employees of the UK government's Foreign & Commonwealth Office were caught up in the 2013 attack on the Westgate Shopping Mall, Nairobi.

The four day assault on the shopping centre, for which Islamist group al-Shabaab claimed responsibility, resulted in 72 deaths, 61 of which were civilian, with over 200 people wounded.

***"I saw two gunmen who were walking, not running and picking targets who were hiding under shelves or cowering behind soft furnishings"***

One FCO employee explains "After the initial explosion and gunfire with the resultant panic and confusion, I found myself thinking it must be an exercise as it sounded so similar to the

training exercises on the Pilgrims training course with explosions and gunshots. This enabled me to think logically, so I proceeded to find shelter and then make provision for contacting the High Commission and the local Security Manager."

"On the course I was involved in realistic role play scenarios, making decisions in fast-moving situations and under gunfire. This is exactly what happened at Westgate"

A Policeman who was quickly on the scene said that the gunmen found people were easy to kill because they did not move and were frozen with fear. The authorities response was uncoordinated and helped to make things worse.

A friendly-fire killing led to the withdrawal of security services. The attackers rearmed & continued killing. So those who didn't try to escape put themselves in greater danger.

### ***Learning Points Recap***

With some training the employee quoted was able to think clearly and logically and quickly find shelter and eventually escape. If you have not had this type of training however there are things you can do.

The policeman said instead of taking cover people were "rooted to the spot" with fear. If shooting starts you should always get down low and look for cover.

Don't stay in one place, even if the shooting stops, you may not be rescued. Remember the terrorists regrouped and went on to continue killing.

Constantly assess your situation, listen to where the sounds are coming from and always be looking for the next place to move

Think about your situational awareness and always be the first to react, it will help to keep you safe.



*Responding quickly and efficiently to an incident can make the difference between life and death.*

*Always be alert and aware of what's happening around you.*

