

InDev Tactical

Utility Workforce Protection Training

2026 Training Catalog

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Utility Workforce Protection Training

Utility workers face a security environment that most industries never deal with. They work alone in remote locations, interact daily with an increasingly confrontational public, and maintain infrastructure that is a growing target for theft, sabotage, and terrorism. At the same time, the expectation has always been that they will handle whatever comes their way and keep the lights on. That expectation has not changed. What has changed is what they are being asked to handle.

InDev Tactical develops and delivers security training specifically for utility organizations. Not adapted from law enforcement programs, not borrowed from corporate security frameworks. Built for utilities from the ground up, by someone who spent decades in the industry before spending decades in security. That combination is what makes InDev's training practical rather than theoretical, and relevant rather than generic.

The programs in this catalog are designed for the people doing the work: field crews, customer service personnel, office staff, supervisors, and everyone in between. Each program addresses a specific, real problem that utility employees face. Each one can be delivered as a standalone session or combined with others as part of a broader training initiative. All of them can be tailored to fit your workforce, your environment, and your current training baseline.

Our Training Philosophy

"Scaring people is not training. Using graphic imagery and aggressive tactics creates anxiety and leaves you with a frustrated and resentful audience. Training comes through connection, understanding, and repetition. Then you build to the required level of intensity, but never exceed it. That is how you train."

Jim Willis

That standard applies to every program InDev delivers. The goal is always a trained employee, not a stressed one. Skills built through practice and repetition at the right level of intensity stay with people when they need them. Anxiety does not.

Programs in This Catalog

The following programs are organized as a natural progression. Most organizations start with ASSIST and build from there. The Core Skills Series addresses the day-to-day security challenges that come up most frequently in utility work. Active Shooter Exercises and Drills are available as an optional add-on to ASSIST training or as a standalone engagement.

- **ASSIST:** Active Shooter and Security Incident Safety Training. InDev's flagship program and the recommended starting point for any utility security training initiative.
- **Situational Awareness I:** Security awareness concepts and skills. The foundation of personal security for any employee who interacts with the public or works in the field.
- **Situational Awareness II:** Essential threat detection and assessment skills. Advanced observational and threat recognition skills for a deeper level of operational security awareness.
- **Conflict De-escalation I:** Practical de-escalation skills for utility personnel. Recognition, communication, and response skills for handling hostile encounters.
- **Conflict De-escalation II:** Developing essential conflict de-escalation skills. Advanced skills and practice for managing hostile encounters effectively.
- **Infrastructure Security:** Securing substations and other critical assets. Practical strategies for protecting utility infrastructure against attack and intrusion.
- **Active Shooter Exercises and Drills:** Optional exercises and three-level drill program to test and sharpen active shooter response skills.

ASSIST: Active Shooter and Security Incident Safety Training©

Active Shooter and Critical Event Response. The Keys to Survival.

ASSIST is InDev's proprietary active shooter response training. This program gives your staff the knowledge, confidence, and skills to deal with a critical event, whether that is an active shooter, a targeted attack, or any other form of lethal threat. It offers practical techniques for surviving a deadly encounter and proactive methods of countering an attack before it reaches its worst outcome.

ASSIST was originally developed to provide critical security skills to people working in insecure and dangerous environments. It has been refined through years of field application and direct operational experience. ASSIST provides your staff with the knowledge and skills to deal with active shooter incidents and other critical events. It offers practical methods and techniques for recognizing and responding to violence.

Training Approach

"When it comes to active shooter response training, you have two groups of employees. In one group are those looking forward to the experience, and in the other are those dreading it. But you are responsible for training both groups. Training focused on group one will typically use graphic imagery and aggressive tactics. That approach can be traumatic for the second group, and scaring people is not training them. However, a soft approach can be equally ineffective. Effective training is done through connection, empathy, repetition, and only as much intensity as necessary. That is how you train."

Jim Willis

ASSIST equips employees with the skills and confidence necessary to handle violence. It dispels myths and misconceptions about violence while offering straightforward survival techniques that any employee can learn and apply. The training does not require participants to be physically imposing or tactically experienced. It requires them to understand what is happening and make good decisions quickly, and it builds those capabilities through structured instruction and progressive practice.

The training can include optional Active Shooter Exercises. These low-stress, low-intensity exercises improve recognition and response skills in a non-aggressive manner, free of graphic imagery or gratuitous action.

ASSIST Critical Event Response Framework

The ASSIST response model provides a clear, memorable framework that employees can access under the extreme stress of a critical event. Each step corresponds to a specific action phase sequenced to maximize survival probability.

A - Action: The immediate, decisive response to recognizing a critical event. Action is the antidote to the well-documented human tendency to pause and seek confirmation before responding to a threat.

S - Shield: Placing a physical barrier between yourself and the threat. This phase covers the selection and use of cover and concealment and the rapid assessment of available options.

S - Survey: Assessing the situation dynamically. Once initial action is taken, participants rapidly evaluate what is happening, where the threat is, what options are available, and what the appropriate next step is.

I - Intervene: Recognizing and acting on opportunities to disrupt or neutralize a threat when survival requires it.

S - Survive: The sustained application of all available resources to remain functional through the duration of the critical event.

T - Transition: Moving from the active phase of the event into the aftermath, including how to interact with law enforcement upon arrival and how to begin the recovery process.

Program Credentials

- Approved for CUSP continuing education credits
- Approved for CLCP continuing education credits
- Meets OSHA workplace violence training recommendations. OSHA identifies workplace violence and active shooter situations as recognizable hazards covered under General Duty Clause, Section 5(a)(1).
- Satisfies federal annual counterterrorism training requirements

Length: Half-day and full-day options. The half-day format covers the core ASSIST response framework and essential threat awareness skills. The full-day format adds depth to each phase and incorporates additional exercises.

ASSIST Program Outline

What the training covers and how it is structured

This training is designed to address the unique needs of utility employees. It identifies methods for recognizing dangerous and deteriorating situations while introducing skills to counter violence. The training emphasizes threat awareness and responses to critical incidents, including active shooter scenarios.

Subjects

1. Understanding workplace violence, including its forms, its triggers, and the range of individuals from which threats most commonly emerge
2. Active Threat Awareness and Recognition. The observational skills needed to identify a threat before it materializes into violence.
3. Active Shooter and Critical Incident Response. A structured, practical framework for surviving the most extreme form of workplace violence.

Objectives

Following this training, participants will:

- Understand how worldviews and culture, and myths and misconceptions, impact security
- Gain the skills needed to deal with violence and survive a critical event
- Gain confidence in their ability to recognize and respond to aggression

Program Outline

Perspective and Concepts: This session introduces basic concepts and issues facing organizations today. It reviews shifting attitudes toward the utility sector, evolving security issues, and the potential for acts of terrorism. Employees cannot accurately assess what they are facing without first understanding the broader environment.

Threat Awareness: This session focuses on recognizing potential threats and signs of impending violence. It develops the recognition skills needed to identify and assess threats quickly. Threat awareness is a trained skill, not a natural instinct, and this session builds that capacity through instruction and practice.

Active Shooter and Critical Event Response: Introduces the three stages of a critical event. This session focuses on dynamic recognition and response to protect yourself before and after the police arrive. Participants leave with a clear understanding of what to do during the law enforcement response window and, equally importantly, what to do when law enforcement arrives.

Aftermath: A look at the steps needed to address a critical event's immediate impacts and consequences. This session introduces the immediate priorities of the post-event period.

Wrap-up and Final Q and A: The program's final discussion and Q and A session to address any remaining concerns. This session ensures that every participant leaves with clarity, not residual anxiety.

OPTIONAL: Active Shooter Exercises

These low-intensity walk-thru exercises help employees develop recognition and response skills.

Goal: Sharpened participant threat perception skills without undue stress or anxiety.

Format: The exercises take place randomly throughout the training session using blank-firing weapons. Typically, three exercises are included in the training, with an optional fourth at the end of the session. The randomized timing mirrors the unpredictability of a real event and trains participants to maintain appropriate awareness throughout the day.

A blank weapon is fired at various locations within the facility. Participants are tasked with three things:

1. Recognizing the sound and correctly identifying it as a potential threat
 2. Determining where and what is happening, including direction and distance
 3. Deciding the best way to escape the situation, given the specific conditions of the moment
- Low-stress exercises without graphic or gratuitous imagery or action
 - No weapon will be pointed at or fired at participants
 - No physical contact or engagement

Due to legal restrictions, active shooter exercises may not be feasible in all areas. The use of blank-firing weapons in exercises may require approval from local law enforcement authorities before being included in any assignment. InDev manages this coordination as part of the pre-training process.

Situational Awareness I

Security Awareness Concepts and Skills

Utility professionals today are increasingly at risk of being harmed by others. The potential for violence has become a work-related reality. Utility employees face threats from angry customers, zealous protesters, thieves, and individuals with harmful intentions, including sociopaths, psychopaths, and terrorists. Each of these threat sources has distinct characteristics, and each requires a different recognition framework. What they share is that they all present observable signals before violence occurs. Situational awareness is the skill that makes those signals visible.

This training helps employees identify potential threats and respond effectively before a situation escalates into violence or before they enter an unsafe environment. The emphasis is on before. Most security training focuses on response after something has already gone wrong. Situational awareness training addresses a prior and more valuable question: how do you recognize a deteriorating situation early enough to avoid it entirely, or to position yourself advantageously before it peaks? The program also introduces strategies for personal safety and various personal protective measures, actions, and tactics that employees can integrate directly into their daily routines.

The training can focus on issues facing your office staff, the unique needs of field employees, or both. Office staff and field employees face meaningfully different threat environments, and the session is structured to address the specific exposures of whichever group is being trained.

Topics Include

1. Understanding situational awareness: what it actually is and how it differs from the vague notion of being alert
2. Macro and micro awareness concepts: broad environmental scanning and close behavioral observation
3. Environmental surveillance: systematic methods for reading a physical environment for safety-relevant information
4. Understanding the Cooper Awareness Scale: a practical, well-proven framework for calibrating alertness to situational demand
5. Daily habits to improve awareness: specific, repeatable behaviors that build situational awareness as a default practice
6. The disconnect between awareness and focus: understanding why directed attention reduces peripheral awareness and how to manage that trade-off in the field
7. Creating a platform of awareness: building personal and organizational habits that support sustained, effective security awareness

Learning Outcomes

After training, participants will better understand situational awareness and have greater competencies in recognizing, avoiding, and escaping dangerous situations. These outcomes are behavioral. Participants will leave doing something differently, not simply knowing something they did not know before.

Benefits

- Improved awareness and personal security
- Increased confidence in recognizing potential threats
- Reduced litigation risk

Program Delivery and Length: The ideal approach is onsite training with participant exercises. Training can also be provided through live remote sessions or Computer-Based Training (CBT) when onsite delivery is not feasible.

Who Should Take This Course?

Managers, staff, and employees who frequently interact with the public, particularly those meeting clients in potentially hazardous or remote settings.

Situational Awareness II

Essential Threat Detection and Assessment Skills

InDev's threat assessment training emphasizes observing environmental and behavioral cues to identify potential threats. This is the operational core of security awareness. Not the general idea of paying attention, but the specific, practiced ability to read an environment and the people in it for signals of hostile intent. This session instructs participants on techniques and tactics for recognizing threats and assessing the level of danger in differing situations. It covers threat markers, signs of hazardous conditions, and indicators that may precede dangerous actions.

The session focuses on developing skills to establish baseline awareness, identify anomalies, and assess changing conditions. It builds essential operational skills to recognize hostile intent hiding in plain sight or masked by everyday activities, and to distinguish genuine threats from mere bluster. That distinction is one of the most practically important skills in the entire security training catalog. The ability to tell the difference between someone who is genuinely dangerous and someone who is angry or posturing is critical for personal safety and for avoiding unnecessary confrontation. The session can be tailored to focus on issues facing office staff, field staff, or both.

Topics Include

1. Threat detection concepts: the foundations of how humans detect threats and how to improve that capacity through training
2. Worksite reconnaissance: systematic methods for reading a worksite before and during a job
3. Recognizing potential threats: specific behavioral and environmental indicators associated with individuals who may intend harm
4. Threat assessment techniques: structured frameworks for evaluating the credibility and imminence of a potential threat
5. Reading intent: advanced observational skills for interpreting behavior and distinguishing genuine hostile intent from expressions of frustration or distress that do not represent real danger
6. Essential detection skills and tradecraft: the practical tools and habits used by security professionals to maintain effective threat detection

Learning Outcomes

Participants gain competencies in identifying potential threats and assessing hostile intent. These competencies apply directly to the day-to-day work environment of utility professionals across the full range of difficult, ambiguous, and potentially dangerous situations they encounter regularly.

Benefits

- Improved staff security
- Increased confidence in threat recognition
- Reduced litigation risk

Program Delivery and Length: The best training approach is a full-day session with exercises. The full-day format provides the depth of instruction and volume of practice necessary to develop genuine competency in threat detection. Training can also be provided through live remote sessions or Computer-Based Training (CBT).

Who Should Take This Course?

Managers, staff, and employees who frequently interact with the public, particularly those who engage with clients in potentially risky or remote settings.

Conflict De-escalation I

Practical De-escalation Skills for Utility Personnel

Utility employees are encountering a more aggressive and confrontational public. This reflects documented changes in the environment in which utilities operate. Public frustration over service disruptions, billing disputes, rate increases, infrastructure projects, and the utility sector's broader role in larger social debates has created a population of customers and community members who bring elevated hostility into their interactions with utility personnel. Minor issues, often magnified by a sense of entitlement, heightened sensitivity, and preconceived notions, can quickly escalate into conflicts. This training equips employees with essential skills to recognize and respond to hostility while effectively managing their own emotions.

The course enhances employees' confidence in dealing with challenging behavior. It introduces de-escalation techniques that help employees understand and address aggressive behavior, ultimately leading to conflict resolution. Understanding aggressive behavior means recognizing where it comes from and what is driving it, because addressing the underlying driver is frequently more effective than attempting to suppress the behavior directly.

Course Focus

Each session is tailored to meet the specific needs of the client's workforce. The following delivery formats are available:

Internal (Office) Staff: CSRs, HR, administrative, and other internal operations personnel. Content emphasizes verbal de-escalation and communication management in controlled indoor settings.

External (Field) Employees: Field staff including ground crews, arborists, construction, right-of-way, and service personnel. Content emphasizes situational awareness, early recognition of escalation, and strategies for managing hostile encounters in uncontrolled environments.

Fused: A blended session covering critical issues for both internal and external staff. Appropriate for organizations whose employees move between office and field roles.

Supervisors' Session: Focused on team leader skills development. Supervisors must manage both the external conflict and the internal dynamics of their team's response to hostile situations.

Executive Staff: A conceptual view of program administration, policies and procedures, and critical issues for senior leaders responsible for designing and supporting de-escalation programs.

Training Includes

- Recognizing aggression and warning signs of aggression
- Maintaining a professional presence
- Managing hostility and proactive communication
- Identifying perilous situations and recognizing when and how to exit
- Effective tactics and techniques

Learning Outcomes

Participants will be introduced to the skills needed to recognize and counter aggressive behavior. They will have increased confidence in their ability to identify threats, gain situational control, and de-escalate volatile encounters.

Benefits

- Improved employee safety
- Increased staff confidence in dealing with aggression and violence
- Reduced risk of litigation

Program Delivery and Length: The ideal approach is onsite training presented as a half-day session with exercises. Training can also be provided through live remote sessions or Computer-Based Training (CBT).

Conflict De-escalation II

Developing Essential Conflict De-escalation Skills

This course expands on the concepts introduced in Conflict De-escalation I to further enhance skill development. De-escalation I introduces the framework and fundamental techniques. De-escalation II is where those techniques become genuine skills through deeper instruction, more complex scenarios, and more demanding practice. It aims to equip participants with the necessary skills to manage hostile encounters effectively, modify aggressive behavior, and resolve conflicts. This interactive training provides a comprehensive learning platform for developing and refining de-escalation skills.

Training Includes

1. Spotting the warning signs of agitation and aggression with sufficient speed to enable a proactive rather than reactive response
2. Keys to maintaining a professional presence: the specific observable behaviors that communicate calm authority even under significant stress
3. Developing proactive communication skills: strategies that get ahead of escalation rather than responding to it
4. Managing aggression and perilous situations where passive de-escalation is no longer sufficient
5. Recognizing and responding to hostility spirals: identifying the pattern by which minor hostility feeds on itself and the intervention points where the spiral can be broken
6. Effective de-escalation tactics and techniques applied to a range of scenarios that reflect the actual situations utility employees encounter

Learning Outcomes

Participants gain the skills needed to recognize and counter aggressive behavior. Participants acquire confidence in identifying threats, maintaining emotional control, and de-escalating hostility. De-escalation II participants not only have a broader toolkit, they have greater confidence applying it across a wider range of conditions, including high-stress and rapidly evolving situations.

Benefits

- Improved personnel security
- Increased confidence in dealing with aggression and violence
- Reduced risk of litigation

Program Delivery and Length: The ideal approach is onsite training presented as a half-day session with exercises. The exercises in this program are more complex and more demanding than those in De-escalation I. Training can also be provided through live remote sessions or Computer-Based Training (CBT).

Infrastructure Security

Securing Substations and Other Critical Assets

This training program offers practical strategies for enhancing infrastructure security. The word practical is deliberate. This program is not a survey of security theory or a compliance review. It is a working set of methods, techniques, and countermeasures that can be assessed, prioritized, and implemented by utility professionals without requiring a large security budget or a dedicated security staff.

Attacks on infrastructure assets are occurring at an alarming rate. While previous assaults primarily targeted large power systems, terrorists and adversarial actors are now shifting their focus to utilities of all sizes and types. They often concentrate on vulnerable lower-tier assets, including electric power, gas, water, communication networks, and major bulk transmission and generation. Smaller utilities that have historically operated without significant security infrastructure are now firmly in the targeting environment.

This program examines the current operating environment and identifies effective methods for protection and defense. It introduces practical tactics, techniques, and countermeasures to improve infrastructure security, organized around established security planning principles and adapted specifically for the utility context.

Topics Include

1. Understanding the new utility operating environment: the current threat landscape, including the actors, motivations, and methods that characterize attacks on utility infrastructure today
2. Practical approaches to infrastructure facility security: site-specific security planning and implementation for substations, water treatment facilities, communication nodes, and other critical assets
3. Security audits, the foundation of enhanced security: how to conduct a structured assessment that identifies vulnerabilities and establishes a prioritized improvement plan
4. Conducting a threat assessment: a systematic process for evaluating the specific threats facing a given asset
5. Signs alone will not cut it: proactive security control measures that go beyond passive signage and fencing
6. Protection zones and other delineation practices
7. The five Ds of perimeter protection: Deter, Detect, Deny, Delay, and Defend
8. The use of CPTED: Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design
9. Effective use of lighting as a security countermeasure
10. Target hardening: planning for security through physical, operational, and procedural measures

Learning Outcomes

After training, participants will be able to recognize and address security vulnerabilities and have the skills needed to enhance infrastructure security. Participants will be able to identify potential threats, utilize pragmatic countermeasures, and develop effective plans for improving security.

Benefits

- Improved infrastructure security
- Increased system reliability
- Reduced litigation risk

Who Should Take This Course?

Managers and operational staff, particularly those responsible for physical plant operations, facility management, security planning, or infrastructure maintenance.

Program Delivery and Length: The ideal approach is onsite training presented as a half-day session with exercises.

Active Shooter Response Exercises and Drills

We can help your team prepare for the worst-case scenario: an active shooter.

InDev's active shooter response training enhances your organization's preparedness. These drills assess current active shooter protocols, evaluate readiness, and teach survival skills and techniques. They are not exercises conducted for compliance purposes. They are rigorous assessments of whether your organization's protocols and personnel are actually prepared for the demands of a real event.

What Is the InDev Difference?

"We create positive employee experiences using real-world conflict expertise. InDev's exercises and drills focus on recognizing what is happening and understanding how to respond in a manner that improves your chances of surviving an encounter. Our goal is to build skills and confidence without the fear and anxiety often associated with active shooter training events."

InDev Tactical

Exercises

InDev offers an Active Shooter Response Exercise option for the ASSIST training session. These low-intensity exercises enhance recognition and response skills using non-aggressive tactics or techniques.

NOTE: Due to the emotional impact drills can have on participants, InDev only accepts active shooter assignments after detailed discussions to determine the client's state of readiness.

Drills

InDev has three active shooter drill levels of increasing intensity and complexity. No matter the drill level, InDev provides the expertise and equipment needed to conduct the drill and coordinates with local law enforcement, first responders, and neighboring facilities.

Level I: Low-stress events covering the basic steps needed to survive. Designed for organizations conducting their first active shooter exercise or introducing a new employee population to practical response training.

Level II: Intermediate exercises with higher-level interaction and complexity. Appropriate for organizations that have completed Level I training and are ready to develop and test their response capabilities under more challenging conditions.

Level III: Full-scale, complex drills that engage law enforcement and emergency response resources. The most comprehensive and realistic preparedness exercises available.

Length: Varies. Typically 2 to 3 hours on-site required to implement.

A Typical Level II Exercise Includes

1. Developing an Action Plan

- Establish exercise goals and objectives
- Conduct a site appraisal
- Develop scenarios and assign roles

2. A Pre-Drill Conference

- A facility-wide meeting is held, typically 1 to 9 days before the drill
- To explain the exercise goals and guidelines
- Covers exercise dos and don'ts
- Answer questions and address concerns

3. The Drill

- Start: initial contact, gunfire, and drill announcement
- Execution of the scenario selected
- End: end-of-drill announcement

4. Post-Drill

- Hot-wash and debriefing to collect information and insights
- Drill Summation Report: findings, recommendations, and suggested next steps

About the Instructor

Jim Willis, MSc, CMAS, CHS-V

President, InDev Tactical

Jim Willis is an electrical engineer, international development specialist, and security expert with over 40 years of experience in the utility sector. After serving in the Navy, he began his utility career as a second-generation lineman. He has held positions as a power system engineer, utility executive, and international development specialist. His career spans a combination of domains that is rare in the security training industry: direct utility field experience, executive leadership, international operations, and advanced security training.

Jim is a Certified Master Antiterrorism Specialist and a Senior-Level Homeland Security Expert. He specializes in conflict and post-conflict security operations and organizational and infrastructure security. Jim has worked in 43 countries for corporate, government, and multilateral clients. He spent over seven years in Afghanistan, aiding with power system restoration, overseeing security operations, and conducting training.

In the U.S., Jim collaborates with clients to improve organizational security. He utilized his security and utility expertise to develop the ASSIST training series. This program offers practical, non-intrusive training tailored to meet your needs.

Education

Master of Science (MSc) in International Development, Security emphasis. Hope International University.

Bachelor of Science (BS) in Electrical Engineering, Electric power focus. Georgia Southern University.

Associate Degrees (AA and AAT) in Pre-engineering and Electrical Power. Bainbridge College.

Security Training

Jim's security skills development includes training from the following:

- Department of Homeland Security
- Defense Security Service
- UN Department of Safety and Security
- Naval Postgraduate School

Certifications

Certified Master Antiterrorism Specialist Antiterrorism Accreditation Board

Homeland Security Expert Level V American Board of Certification in Homeland Security

METT Expert Ekman Institute

Professional Memberships

- Society for International Development (SID-Washington)
- The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE)
- International Executive Security Association (IESA)
- International NGO Safety and Security Association (INSSA)
- International Association for Counterterrorism and Security Professionals (IACSP)
- Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC)
- The Maritime Security Centre, Horn of Africa (MSCHOA)
- National Utility Training and Safety Education Association (NUTSEA)